CHILDREN'S BOOK
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Anthony Hewitt

from his friend Harriet Bassett Savage

1833

CHRISTIAN PARENT'S ASSISTANT,

OR

TALES,

FOR THE

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

OF

YOUTH.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LETTERS ON FEMALE CHARACTER."

"What man is there among you, whom if his son ask bread, will give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will give him a serpent?"—Matt. vii, 9, 10.

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Eastern District of Virginia to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the eighth day of June, in the fifty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, ARIEL WORKS, of the said District, hath deposited in this Office, the Title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following to wit: "Christian Parent's Assistant, or Tales, for the Moral and Religious Instructions of Youth. By the author of "Letters on Female Character." "What man is there among you, whom if his son ask bread will give him a stone? or if he ask a fish will give him a serpent?"—Matt. vii, 9, 10. In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the time therein mentioned."

Seal.

RD: JEFFRIES,
Clerk of the E. D. of Va.

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INTRODUCTION.

MOTHERS OF AMERICA:

THE most interesting part of the population of our country, is now under your superintendence. The continuance of our national prosperity depends, in no inconsiderable degree, upon the manner in which you acquit yourselves of this trust. Your children are daily receiving either good or evil from your hands. Every sentence that you utter in their presence, constitutes a part of their education. Each sentiment or opinion emphatically expressed by you in their hearing, has a probable chance of becoming irrevocably fixed in their minds as a principle of action. You are daily furnishing them with materials for thought, and it behooves you to be particularly cautious, nay, fastidious in your selection. Perhaps your children may be very young; you may be just establishing yourselves for life, with one lively prattler lisping at your knee, and another fragile flower, that is still the tenant of the cradle. But even in these circumstances you must commence

your preparations for furnishing these young candidates for immortality with fit themes for exercising their opening faculties.

Perhaps your thoughts may turn principally towards the arrangement of your domestic affairs; and you may think it time enough to prepare for the education of your children when they grow older.

Believe me, this is a dangerous error:—you had better begin at once to prepare for the most important part of your duties, and accustom yourselves to bring the strongest powers of your mind to bear upon them. You should never, for an instant, lose sight of the idea that you are educating subjects for the Redeemer's kingdom. Look at your children frequently with this reflection present to your mind. "These are candidates for *immortal* happiness. Their temporal interests are of small importance, provided I can put them in a way of receiving a heavenly inheritance."

Some Mothers, I am aware, have an ardent desire to form the morals of their children without any reference to religion. They think it will be time enough to inculcate the *abstruse* doctrines of Christianity, when the mental powers are further developed; but this is another mistake. So I have heard parents

assert, when their *very* little children told falsehoods, that they were too young to understand the nature of truth. Alas! They are never too young to evince the evil passions incident to humanity, and surely the period at which they begin to show the leaven of human corruption, *must* be the most proper time to commence a system of efficient counteraction. Those very doctrines of christianity which are dreaded as abstruse, contain the sole antidote for the inherent venom of moral evil, yea, and so comprehensive is this remedy, that it is capable of effectual application to every degree and stage of the virulent infection.—Christian Mother, you may even mingle its salubrious balm, with the nutriment provided by beneficent Providence for the babe that is cradled in your bosom. Before that infant can comprehend even the simplest terms of speech invented by maternal fondness, you can lift up your heart in prayer, and ask the Being who blessed you with its smiles, to instil into its heart the holy breathings of divine purity. You cannot, it is true, give lessons now to your infant; but you can prepare your own mind against the time when your lessons will be required. You can think over the probable scope and requirements of future circumstances, and pray fervently that

you may be prepared to fulfil all the duties attached to the maternal character. You will find on mature reflection, that the fundamental doctrines of christianity are inseparably intwined with the moral code: or rather, you will discover, that Religion prepares the heart to admit the precepts of morality. It gives life and energy to human virtue, for it presents an adequate motive for practising what is repugnant to the natural character.

It will always be acknowledged that the conduct of individuals is mainly guided by the motives which actuate them. Where these motives are strong and good, the conduct will be upright aud correct; where they are bad, the actions will partake of their depravity. It follows, therefore, that your success in cultivating the moral qualities of your offspring, will depend entirely upon the strength of the impelling principle which actuates that conduct. If you inculcate at the commencement, a motive of adequate strength and purity, you will have a right to expect ample fruits of virtue from the moral plant you are rearing. But if you instil poison into the sap, which gives vitality to the fair scion on which your hopes are placed, you may grieve, but you must not wonder at the consequences.

Are you now teaching your female infants

to decorate their persons? Oh beware! for you are nurturing the germ of innate vanity, and strengthening a vicious principle in the minds of your offspring. Every superfluous ornament—every advance towards the prevalent fashion in the garments of these little creatures, casts a shade upon the moral sense, and blights the fair blossom of virtue, just as it is beginning to develop. You cannot begin too soon to form the principles of your children, to lay the broad foundation of their future moral characters on the firmest basis.—You cannot expect to prosper in this work if you begin by giving them false estimates of human enjoyments. Thus, if you make outward decoration a matter of such supreme importance now, they will grow up with an extravagant estimate of the value of personal beauty, or perhaps with a firm conviction that wealth is absolutely essential to happiness, because it affords the means of external ornament.

Consider for a moment, ye who have it in charge to educate subjects for Christ's eternal kingdom, how utterly inadequate to the support of virtuous principles, is the foundation usually laid in childhood, by the prevailing modes of instruction. The immortal soul has yearnings after higher things than the ephe-

meral objects of sensual gratification. Your children must be men and women if they live to attain the age of adolescence. Say, then, would you wish them to shew forth no better qualities than those now nurturing in their young hearts? Would you be satisfied with the blossoms and fruits of the insignificant things you are fostering for your present amusement? I am sure you would not; I feel convinced that you are proceeding in your present mistaken plan, without forethought, and doubtless, as soon as the consequences of your error are pointed out, you will abjure it forever.

There are many young Mothers in the world, who fall into dangerous errors from inexperience and ignorance of the true nature of their maternal duties. They love their children with instinctive, not a *rational* affection. It frequently happens that children brought up in this manner turn out very differently from what their tender parents have anticipated. But the cause of this failure in their fondest hopes may be traced to the very excess of their affection. Unless parental love is *rational*, it certainly cannot be expected to produce rational consequences. Children may indulge their natural propensities, until they become too strong for maternal influence

to subjugate; and it not unfrequently happens, that the usual period allotted for commencing restrictive measures is, one at which the passions have gained disastrous strength by unrestrained indulgence.

It is not wonderful that a timid, gentle, or at least, an inexperienced woman should fail in attempting to stem the torrent that has roared and dashed with increasing violence in the bosom of her child, gathering strength with every progressive year, and preparing to foam off its madness rather than to subside into a placid current. Such a task would be deemed too hard for even masculine courage to undertake. Women too often shrink from the performance of a duty which their own thoughtless or culpable neglect has rendered difficult.

But truly judicious mothers will watch for the first incipient tokens of that noxious growth which they well know is indigenous in the human heart. They will apply the remedy before the evil has outgrown their own feeble powers of counteraction. The result of such a prudent course will soon be obvious to even casual observers. Children subjected to such salutary discipline, will learn to be docile, and self-denying. They can soon learn to impose restraint upon themselves, and

that is the true method of eradicating the natural evils of the heart. All outward restraints are compulsatory, and will only be effectual while the outward power of compulsion is in operation; but children may be taught much earlier than parents generally imagine, to practise inward restraints. Give them, as I before said, an adequate motive, such for instance, as love to God, and they will quickly learn to act under its impulse. The fear of parental censure is not sufficient to restrain them at all times, but the desire to please an Omniscient Being is ever present to the mind, and gains strength by exercise. Mothers should teach their children at a very early period, to look up to a higher power than their parental will or wishes, as a motive for correctness of deportment. They should be made sensible that in breaking the commandment which enjoins them to "honor their parents," they not only offend the parents themselves, but incur the more awful penalty of offending their Creator and their judge.

Some Mothers assert that children are so literal in comprehending what is told them, that they can only believe what they see, and *therefore* they find it impossible to make them understand any explanations of a *deity*. But this is entirely wrong. How easy, for in-

stance, do ignorant superstitious servants find it, to make children conceive awful ideas of supernatural appearances? They become afraid of their own shadows from being told that the air is peopled with invisible spirits. Their imaginations take strong hold of the marvellous and terrible, as many persons can testify by experience, who will take the trouble to recollect their infantine impressions. Surely, then, if the childish intellect can be imbued with superstitious fears, it must be capable of receiving impressions of high and holy things.

I would then recommend to Mothers an early attempt to fix the conception of a deity presiding over created things, on the minds of their children. Begin by explaining to them the goodness of the Supreme Being. Let them become familiarized to the idea that they owe every blessing, and every enjoyment of life to his bounty. The child of two years old can be made sensible that the kindness of its Mother deserves a return of affection. Accustom the same child to a constant reference of every event of its life, to a higher power than the visible agency of its parents. As it grows older, question it frequently on the subject of these impressions, and take care to maintain and strengthen them as the mind develops.

Parents should be careful to explain to their children, that every instance of their misconduct has more important results than the excitement of parental displeasure. Say to them, "You have done wrong—you have broken my rules and disobeyed my commands: but in doing this you have also displeased your heavenly Father. In doing that you incur a far greater risk, than drawing on yourself my greatest displeasure. God is the author of all your blessings. He has commanded you to do some things, and not to do others. Unless you obey His commands you have no right to expect a continuance of His favors, and what would become of you if He were to withdraw the blessings He has bestowed on you? Besides, are you not sensible of the ingratitude you are guilty of towards this good and kind Parent? *I* think hard of your unkindness to me in thus disobeying my precepts, and making me unhappy by your bad conduct; but He who reads every thought of your bosom, must have far more cause to be displeased with you than yourself. Perhaps at this moment he sees in your heart bad passions, and bad intentions. *I* cannot tell what is passing within you, for I am only able to judge by your outward actions; but God knows all your most secret de-

signs. You had better, therefore, humble yourself at once to him; ask his forgiveness, and I will give you mine. When I see you reconciled to Him, to whom you owe so much more than you do to me, I shall be happy again; but while you are laboring under the displeasure of your God, I am continually afraid that he will punish you in some way or other. Dont be afraid of my anger; I am sorry, to be sure, that you should have behaved so much amiss, but I will pray for you, and ask the Lord to forgive you."

By addressing such discourse to your children, you cannot fail to instil into their growing minds an abiding sense of their dependance upon the Supreme Being. While you are training their affections towards yourself, as their visible parent, you can lead them onward till they centre in the Father of their immortal spirits. The habit of referring every thing to a higher authority than your own, has a tendency to keep you humble, while it exalts the minds of your children.

We should not hear such frequent complaints in our Southern States, of badly regulated families, if the Legitimate Ruler of us all were more frequently acknowledged as the paramount authority in our domestic circles. Both servants and children should be taught

first to obey Him, and that obedience will necessarily involve all the subordinate branches of practical submission. The child or the servant who walks in the path of christian duty, and practises obedience to God, will of course perform with strict propriety his duty to his earthly ruler, provided at least that ruler be a christian.

Mothers, who conscientiously lead their children to the Saviour of mankind, and early request his aid in training them for immortality, need not entertain a doubt of ultimate success. But I candidly confess that no female within the circle of my acquaintance is competent to educate her children without the aid of which I speak. Nor can I profess to assist Mothers in the arduous task allotted them by Providence, in any other manner than by pointing out to them the source of all moral strength and recommending a diligent attention to the means of grace. The Bible alone exhibits man in his proper light as a fallen creature, and the Bible alone points out the only method by which he can avoid the penalties of his fallen condition. I would therefore earnestly advise all Mothers to resort to this holy source of true wisdom, with a determined resolution to "drink deep" of the perennial spring, as the sole efficient method of forti-

fying themselves and their tender offspring against the inevitable evils of life. Let them draw all their rules of domestic management from the page of inspiration, and then leave the result of their labors in the hands of Him who ruleth all things.

One particular hint I must be allowed to give. It is an awful truth that avarice is a prevalent vice among christians of the present day. There is scarcely a church in our Southern country, among whose members there exists not a Judas, ready to betray his master for thirty pieces of silver. Alas! I shudder while I advert to this incontrovertible fact. Covetousness, that awful species of idolatry, prevails in the bosoms of our worshipping assemblies. Members, aye, and officers of the church, are accused with justice of resorting to unholy means of amassing wealth, which is hoarded in their coffers and strenuously withheld from the charitable institutions of the day. It is even alleged, not only in general but in individual cases, that officers of the church are in the habit of demanding usurious interest of their necessitous neighbors, and wringing from the hands of the poor and needy the hard earned and parsimonious gains of their labor. This is a crying abomination, and unless it is openly

noticed and the offenders dismissed with shame from their posts of honor in the sanctuary, the holy cause of religion will suffer among us, and our Lord and Master be crucified anew in the house of his friends.

But females can do little towards arresting hardened offenders against their God. They may however make their services effectual in casting out this leaven from the rising generation.

Let Mothers guard particularly against the propagation of the vice of covetousness in their children. Some people maintain that they cannot inculcate *generosity* without falling into the extreme of extravagance. But surely a little exertion of common sense will suffice to draw a distinct and impassable line between a virtue and a vice. One simple rule is sufficient. Teach children to stint their personal gratifications, but never to urge the necessity of economy as an excuse for refusing to aid in a work of charity. I have known mothers, who were dressed above their circumstances, to withhold the smallest mite from a charitable contribution, on the plea of having nothing to bestow.

One thing is certain, that few people can afford to be generous and self-indulgent at the same time. When we hear persons in good

circumstances, or even in a state of mediocrity refuse to give a mite in charity, we may safely infer that their desires are not very ardent. As a proof of this fact we may bring forward instances of hard working people who give more from the earnings of their industry, than many rich people do from their overflowing abundance.

Mothers should train their little ones to put every trifle that falls into their hands, into some charitable fund, and teach them at the same time, that this is a mere duty, and not an act that deserves applause. Teach them to *give*, and not only that, but teach them to give with simplicity.

The Author of the following Tales has found considerable benefit from inventing little stories for her children, each of which tended to exemplify some important moral or religious truth. This use of fiction she considers both innocent and expedient, and therefore does not hesitate to recommend it to others. The title is borrowed from Miss Edgeworth, whose excellent works for children would have required no successors in that department of literature, had she not omitted the paramount agent of all moral improvement, in excluding religion from her pages.

The following Tales, though incalculably inferior in every other point, to those of Miss E., have, at least, the merit of an attempt to mingle christianity with the intellectual nourishment of the rising generation. They are respectfully submitted to the judgment of Amerioan Mothers, by the AUTHOR.

THE

Christian Parent's Assistant.

PATIENT PAUL.

In one of the beautiful little valleys so common in the Northern part of Virginia, lived a Widow in narrow circumstances, with two little sons, and an old negro man, who gave her some assistance in cultivating her garden and corn field. This widow had known better days, and still retained much of that pride which is so often to be found in the lowest grade of adversity.

It is much to be regretted that this species of pride should stand proxy before the world, for that calm and dignified endurance of the will of Heaven, which is sometimes the companion of misfortune. The widow Allen had been brought up to think a great deal of herself, because her mother was a stray scion from some old aristocratic root of gentility in her native state. This made her hold her head above the neighboring people of precisely her own grade

in society. She found means to bring in her family name on all occasions, particularly in conversing with her poorest and most indifferently clad neighbors. Paul Allen, the widow's eldest son, was a boy of remarkably unprepossessing appearance; while his younger brother Joseph was a beautiful child. Paul had met with an accident in his childhood, which made him halt in his gait, and his features were unusually course and lumpish, besides a terrible squint in his left eye. All these circumstances contributed to make his mother overlook him, and give all her favor to her youngest child. The widow undertook to teach her children to read; but Paul was so disastrously dull, that he defied her skill and exhausted her patience. A rich gentleman in the neighborhood gave widow Allen permission to send her eldest son to his family Tutor, but here too, Poor Paul was declared ed incapable of receiving the simplest rudiments of the most ordinary education. 'Tis true, the widow herself told the schoolmaster, that Paul was an idiot, that she defied him to make the child comprehend the Alphabet, and this report was actually made to the gentleman who directed the school, so that none could tell whether the poor boy had been fairly tried, or had been condemned without trial on his mother's accusation.

Things were in this situation when a new inhabitant came to take possession of a fine es-

tate in the neighborhood of Eastburn; the little village in the valley we have described.—Mr Roper, for that was the gentleman's name, soon gave token of being widely different from his neighbors in many respects.

But we will introduce him to the reader by giving the substance of a conversation between widow Allen and Nanny Trotter one of the permanent gossips of the neighborhood, whose tongue supplied the place of a weekly gazette to the village of Eastburn.

"Well neighbor Allen," said the breathless Nanny, "I have just run over to tell you that I have been to "the Willows" already, and looked Mr Roper and his family well over, I warrant you. (Now "the Willows" was the name of Mr Roper's country seat, and poor widow Allen had been casting about in her own mind, the various probabilities of her deriving some advantage from her wealthy neighbors.") "Well Nanny," was the reply, "and pray what sort of folks may they be?" "Why Mrs Allen, you know I am quite smart at finding out whether people are really and truly gentlefolks, or whether they take upon themselves to be so because of their money." Nanny had now judiciously fallen in with the prevailing foible of her neighbor. Mrs Allen brightened up, and said, "as to that Nanny you may have caught some of your judgment in such matters from *me*, for I *do* pride myself upon knowing gentle from simple, in the

dark as one may say. But Nanny, that sort of knowledge is in *my* blood, you know. The Highterflyters were genteel to their very dregs, and my mother was'nt a Highterflyter for nothing; and Nanny, you may do me a great favor by mentioning this name the next time you go to the Willows, and telling the family that one of their nearest neighbors was the daughter of a Highterflyter. I warrant you, Mr Roper will stare when he hears it, for he knows all about my family, no doubt. High gentry always keep together, and know how to value each other. And you may tell them, Nanny, that my grandfather on the mother's side, was one of the Clutterbuck's, a good high family too. One of my great uncles of that name owned two plantations and forty negroes; but, poor man, he was given to the bottle, and soon drank them up, and left nothing to his family but a name. Now some people pretend to despise a name; but 'tis no proof of wisdom I can tell you. But Nanny, tell me something about the Ropers, I dont much like the name. My grandfather had an overseer of that name once I remember."

"I dont know about the name," said Nanny, "but I can tell you all about the people who bear it. Supposing, as they were new comers, they would want fowls, I just carried the white hen's chickens over, and a couple of dozen of eggs. The chickens were very plump, and the eggs

fresh, and I put on my best clothes, and borrowed neighbor Dicken's shawl." "Well, but the Ropers," interrupted Mrs Allen. "Oh dear, I forgot; Mr Roper is one of your grave sober looking men, who walks as if he was counting his steps. He is a hard favored man, and squints as much as your Paul. He was dressed all over in homespun, very neat and pretty I assure you. Mrs Roper had on a plain calico wrapper, and a muslin cap. The two young ladies had on the same calico, and the little girl about five years old, had on striped copperas and white Virginia cloth." "You don't say so," said the widow with uplifted hands and eyes, "Copperas Virginia cloth! why Nanny, your eyes must have deceived you, or may be 'twas not their child!" "O yes it was, said Nanny, "I asked Mrs Roper if that was her youngest, and she said yes, and I was near enough to the child to be able to see that the cloth was about a seven yard thread." "Well," said the widow, "this is truly surprising; now in the time of the war, it was highly creditable to the great folks to wear homespun. My grandmother had a beautiful dress about that time woven in the 800 sley. But neighbor, I have always thought copperas a *vulgar* color, and I never have suffered even Paul to wear it. I have some proper pride you know, and love to be distinguished from the *very* lowest, though I am unfortunately poor.

"But," said Nanny, "I hav'ent told you how civilly I was treated at the Willows. Mrs Roper made me sit down near her, and asked me a good many questions. She bought my chickens and eggs at a word, and paid me for them in white silver. She asked me where I lived, and if I took in weaving. As luck would have it, I had on my dimity frock that I wove myself, and Mrs Roper looked at it and praised it mightily. She engaged me to bring her more chickens and eggs; and when I told her, grandmother was sick, she gave me half a loaf of light bread for her. Dinner came in while I staid, and they asked me to table; every thing was plain and good, but there was no sort of wine or spirits, and Mr Roper asked me if there was a Temperance Society in the neighborhood. He asked me too, if there was a Sabbath School; I never heard of such a thing in my life, did you Mrs Allen?" "No indeed Nanny; I suppose its some new fangled notion people have got of teaching poor children of a Sunday, and so taking away all their play time from the poor tired things. This I know though, that no child of mine shall demean himself by going to such a place."

While this conversation was going on, who should happen to come into the widow's house but Mr Roper himself. He shook hands with Nanny as an acquaintance, and accepted Mrs Allen's offer of a chair. The widow seemed a

good deal discomfitted by this unexpected honor, for she was one of those people who like to be prepared in more ways than one, for all important events. She would doubtless have put on a calico gown, and a nice cap, and besides that, have furnished herself with some preparatory phrases for conversation.

Her house was somewhat littered, for Paul was seated in a corner stripping willow twigs to make a basket, and Joseph had crumbled his short cake (made exclusively for himself,) over the floor. The widow's countenance did not therefore express as much pleasure, as she herself would have wished to show on the occasion. But it must be confessed that the human features are great telltales, and will spell out among them a word of disapprobation, as clevcrly as the alphabet itself.

Mr Roper began by noticing the children, and asking Paul, "if he had been regularly taught to make willow baskets?" Before the child could speak, his ready mother had answered for him. "No sir, he is a poor half witted thing, that can't learn any thing; but he is always projecting about some foolish thing or other, and littering the house as you see." So saying, she seized the broom with energy, and began to brush away, not only the litter, but the pealed willows which lay at Paul's feet. The boy attempted gently to rescue his work, but his mother twitched them with an angry

gesture out of his hands and threw them behind the fire. "Have done with your nonsense," said she, "and go out and drive the crows from the corn-field, that's all you are good for, you scare-crow. Joseph my darling, don't drop your greasy crumbs on mother's floor, there's a good boy." "I can't help it mother," said he pertly, "you made my cake too greasy, I am sick at the stomach with eating it." Mr Roper had dexterously rescued poor Paul's willows from the flames during this dialogue, and he now began to assist the little fellow in twisting the pealed branches. He was pleased with the air of patient submission, visible in the course features of the ill favored child.

"Have you ever made a basket in this way?" asked Mr Roper. "No sir," quickly answered Mrs Allen, who, having asserted that her son was half witted, seemed to feel it incumbent upon her to supply him with words, if not with ideas. "He's always projecting as I told you, sir, but does'nt understand the thing at all, nor can't, being as I said before, a half witted child. Why sir, he never could be learned to read, though I myself undertook him, sir, and afterwards Major Ramsay's tutor, a vastly clever man, but all in vain, sir; get out, as I told you Paul, and scare away the crows from the corn, boy. "Let him stay a little while," said Mr Roper, "I want to examine him myself. Come here Paul, what are these things I hold in my

hand?" "Willow twigs, sir," said the boy promptly. "And where do they grow," "By the side of the brook, sir." "And so you never had patience to finish a basket, hey!" The boy looked at his mother as if asking leave to contradict her late assertion, that he never had finished a basket. But little Joseph who had no such scruples took upon himself to reply; "indeed, but he did finish one mother, though you did not know it." "And pray what did you do with it, said his mother fiercely. How was I to know that you had made one, if I was not to be allowed to see it. "I sold it, said the child meekly." "And who did you sell it to? and what did you get for it?" again retorted the mother. "I sold it to Mrs Swan at Eastburn, for eighteen pence." "And what did you do with the money, sirrah? but I need not ask; it was all laid out in cakes and apples, I warrant, and poor little Joey did not have a taste—did you, my son?"

Mr Roper observed that the children looked perplexed and unhappy, and he endeavored to cheer them by changing the conversation. "Mrs Allen," said he, "I wish to open a Sabbath School in the neighborhood, and I want to bespeak your little boys as scholars. I hope my neighbors will take me upon trust for a little while, and believe me, when I tell them what blessed effects I have seen produced by Sabbath Schools. In a little while they will see them with their

own eyes, and seeing is believing, you know, Mrs Allen." The widow looked at Nanny and blushed. She was afraid to tell Mr Roper her thoughts freely, for there was a something in his countenance which daunted her. She could not acquiese in his proposition either, without laying herself open to the charge of inconsistency, before Nanny too, on whom she always looked down as an inferior.

Mr Roper took notice of the widow's perplexities, and after a few words of explanation, he departed without waiting for an answer. "I vow" said Mrs Allen, changing the whole expression of her countenance, and relaxing into ease and confidence, "I vow, Nanny, this is an odd man, as ever my eyes lighted on; why! I could hardly speak to him, though he stood here before me. And yet he's no such wonder of comeliness either. If *he* passes for a beauty, why my Paul will turn out something yet, and that's true, where's the boy now? here, sirrah, take these eggs into Mrs Swan, of Eastburn, and ask her to send me the value of them in coffee, do you hear?" The boy took the basket and departed. In the course of his walk he again encountered Mr Roper, who spoke kindly to him. It so happened that they entered Mrs Swan's house together, Mr Roper having occasion to visit the shop to make some purchases. Mrs Swan, after receiving her gentleman customer in a proper manner. turned to

the timid little boy, and asked him what he wanted? saying at the same time encouragingly, "Where's my other basket, my man, surely you've had time to finish it before this? The flannel is ready for your mother's jacket, as soon as you bring me the basket; here it is, a remnant worth a deal more than your two baskets; but I love to encourage little boys in working for their widowed mothers."

Mr Roper heard these words, and asked Paul, if it was true that the flannel was for his mother; "Yes sir," said the boy, "I heard her complain of being cold, and I thought a flannel jacket would keep her warm this winter." The child said this naturally, as if he was expressing the most simple and honest feeling of his heart.

Mr Roper determined from this time to do something for the neglected child of widow Allen. He hired Paul by the day, to work in his garden, though not without some reluctance on the mother's part, to disgrace the blood of the Highterflyters by such an humiliation. Paul became cheerful and happy, when removed from the incessant scolding and fault finding of his mother. Mr Roper had brought with him to the neighborhood a family Tutor, of a very different character from the one who had formerly attempted to instruct Paul. This gentleman finding the child cowed and crest-fallen, by ridicule and harsh treatment, took the right method of inspiring Paul with confidence in himself.

With great patience he gave him his lessons *alone* and soon found cause to congratulate himself on his benevolent perseverance. The boy, who at first boggled and blushed and seemed actually stupid, finding his teacher determined to persevere, became himself industrious and attentive. As soon as he found that he actually could learn, he became devotedly fond of his book, and at the end of his first year's tuition, was as far advanced as any boy in the school.

Mr Roper had endeavored from the first to make Mrs Allen ashamed of her injudicious management of poor Paul. He did not fail to improve the story of the adventure with Mrs Swan; but still, Mrs Allen was sceptical on the subject of her son's improvement. She had tried to teach him herself, she said, and she reckoned she could read as well as another. But Mr Ormsby, the tutor's word could not be gainsayed, and the widow was well pleased to have her son under such patronage as Mr Roper's.

The Sabbath School plan, met with great opposition; nevertheless Paul *would* attend it diligently. 'Twas in vain that widow Allen assured him "he was disgracing the blood of the Highterflyters." Paul alleged that Mr Roper's own children attended, and were subjected to the same control with the rest.

In a few years there was a wonderful change

in the morals and manners of the village of Eastburn, and the neighborhood around. Not more than half the usual quantity of whisky was drunk; and several men of notoriously vicious habits were entirely reformed. All this good was attributable to the example and precepts of Mr Roper.

He was a man of stern virtue, but gentle and conciliating manners. Every one loved him, even those on whose evil practises he was the most severe; for he made it clear to all men, that, like the Saviour of mankind, he loved the sinner, while he hated the sin. Instead of proudly shunning, or loudly abusing the notoriously bad, he would make it his business to see and converse with them. He would point out all the evil consequences resulting from the practise of the vices they were addicted to, and then would explain to them the means by which the grossest ill doer may become a virtuous man. "Look at me," he would say, "I am made of dust like other men, and have the same leaven of sin in my composition. The reason why I am better than you, is simply because God made me to differ; he guarded me from temptation, and he will bring you back to virtue if you will suffer him. As bad, and worse men than yourself heve been pardoned." He then would read them the most striking exemplifications of this truth from scripture.

Some men who set up for reformers, really

set to work so harshly, that not much success can be expected from their endeavors. They are bigotted to their own opinions, and ready to quarrel with all who differ from them. They obviously mean to do the work themselves, or not suffer it to be done at all. In estimating the conduct of their neighbors, they uniformly overwhelm with ridicule all who differ from themselves, and will stop the progress of improvement, if it is not carried on under their auspices. They listen with avidity to Gossips who tell them evil things of those against whom they are prejudiced; but are observed not to like much those neighbors who speak well of others. Thus they encourage about them a set of artful parasites, who come duly charged with censure of those whom they have discovered to be out of favor at "the great house." To exemplify this remark, we will give a sketch of what passed one morning at the house of Mr Ramsay, who, until the coming of Mr Roper, had been the richest and most influential man in the county.

Nanny Trotter had brought her usual complement of eggs and chickens to Mrs Ramsay; after delivering which, she was allowed to converse freely with the family.

"And so Nanny," said Miss Clementina Ramsay, "Paul Allen has turned out to be one of Mr Roper's geniuses, I should not be surprised if the idiot was to be set up as our delegate to the general assembly, if he lives to be a

man. Mr Roper thinks he has all our necks in a yoke." "And yet," said Mrs Ramsay, "before this wonderful man came, Clementina, your father was greatly thought of. I really think the ingratitude of our neighbors is shameful. No sooner did they find a new pigeon to pluck, but they must away from their old haunts. I'm sure Mr Ramsay talked as much about temperance societies as Mr Roper, and yet not a soul would listen to him. And few or none of the neighbours would send their children to our school, though it was kept on week days, and not on the Sabbath."

"As for us, Mr Roper has treated us like dogs. We sent to invite him to dinner, and he would't come himself, or let any of his family come, because it was Sunday, forsooth, as if that was not the fittest day for visiting. Then, I ventured to ask for a slip of moss rose, and was refused peremptorily. After that, Clementina went to see the young ladies, and was refused the pattern of their spencers. They point blank said they could not be at the trouble of getting out their patterns, and that they did not lend out such things." (Now this was a wilful misunderstanding, for the ladies said their patterns were lent out at that time.) "Mr Roper had a horse too, for sale, and Mr Ramsay sent his overseer to try and purchase it, but he declared positively that Mr Roper refused to sell him the horse though he agreed for the price. Now all

these things plainly prove, that these people are proud and arrogant."

While Mrs Ramsay was thus speaking, a knock was heard at the door, and on opening it the whole Roper family appeared. They were received rather awkwardly, for the good lady of the house was considerably alarmed, as her countenance indicated. Mrs Roper desired a servant who accompanied her, to deposit a flower pot on the table. "Here is a moss rose for you, Mrs Ramsay," said the Lady. "I have trained it carefully for you until it was fit for transplanting. When you asked for a slip, the parent plant had just been removed, and it would have been dangerous to touch it." Scarcely had this offering been made and accepted, when Miss Roper took out something from her work basket, and handed it to Miss Clementina Ramsay. "There are the patterns that you asked for," said she. "My sister and myself were sorry that we had it not in our power to give them to you sooner, but we had lent them out, and have just got them home. As if every mistake was about to be explained at once, Mr Roper proceeded to state, that he had just heard a piece of news which had given him considerable uneasiness. "That unlucky colt of mine," said he to Mrs Ramsay, "that your husband wanted to purchase, was, I knew well, an incurably vicious animal. But I little thought he would baffle the stage drivers, to whom I sold

him for much less than Mr Ramsay offered me. I have just heard that he has thrown a man, and fractured his leg. I wish, with all my heart, I had shot him at once, a thing I was greatly tempted to do, but every body admired him, and thought he could be conquered by a skilful hand."

But notwithstanding these conciliatory circumstances, the Ropers found their neighbors hard to deal with. They were proud and prejudiced, so that real good will was thrown away upon them. They still continued to catch every whisper of malignant gossip, and even made their poor neighbors instrumental to the maintainance of their evil passions. In this business, widow Allen was found an able ally, for she had taken dire offence at Mr Roper, because as she said, "he had wheedled Paul till he was always going off on something he had no business with."

The true state of the case was this, that patient Paul had never been kindly treated in his life, until Mr Roper took notice of him. And, (as sometimes happens to a hard favored, ungainly youth,) a little gentleness had won his whole heart, and awakened feelings from the very depths of his soul. Under the kind and judicious management of his benefactor, the character of this boy was daily exhibiting new excellencies. His gratitude was so thoroughly awakened, that many latent good qualities de-

veloped themselves along with this predominant trait: from hour to hour he became more docile, more obedient, and what was still more wonderful, he actually became ready handed, and quick witted. His patron had conceived a plan for him, which he now explained to the widow as follows. "Mrs Allen," said he, "I have a great desire to be useful, permanently useful to your son Paul. Do you think you can spare him to me altogether for a couple of years?" "Sir," said the widow, swallowing her anger with a gulp, "I am sorry to say that I can't possibly part with Paul. He is my main stay in the corn field, for old Mingo is monstrous frail." "Well, but I mean to put Paul in a way of helping you out with money, which will be the same thing as cultivating your corn field, for the money he will earn in my service, will *buy* corn, you know as much, and more than your single field will produce.

"In your service," said the widow coloring, "I'm willing to believe that my Paul will do better for himself, than by entering any body's service, sir. 'Tis well known he is not a common boy, no wise." "I do really think well of your son, Mrs Allen, so well, that I have it in view to put him in a place of trust. I intend he shall be my overseer another year, if you've no objection." "An overseer!" exclaimed the grand daughter of the Highterflyters, in great indignation, "No sir, none of the family

I sprung from, have ever demeaned themselves by following that lowlived trade. We are poor sir, but you'll find that we have some *proper pride* remaining." Mr Roper could scarcely refrain from smiling, as the widow broke out in such a characteristic flight. But as he was a man of true benevolence of heart, he checked his rising disgust. Alas! thought he, this is but too common a failing, even among those who have been brought up to know better. Proper pride, is the watchword of all who want an excuse for their follies.

"Mrs Allen," said he gently, "I have often heard of *proper pride*, but I assure you as a man and a Christian, that I do not know what sort of pride it is. If it is that pride that prevents people from earning their bread by decent industry, I must tell you it cannot be a proper feeling."

"Poverty is no crime," interrupted the widow hastily, awed in spite of herself, by Mr Roper's manner. "Who ever said it was?" asked he again. "Not I, Mrs Allen, but as we two are here alone, I must tell you that such pride of heart as you possess, *is a crime*. Do not be angry with me, for that will do you no good, and it may do you harm. Anger is always dangerous. I tell you again, that you can never hope for the blessing of heaven, until you subdue your pride. Take your Bible, "learn of him who is meek and lowly of heart," while you resolutely search your heart and break down your strong holds of passion and of pride."

By this time the widow was in tears, but whether they sprung from a good or an evil source, had not yet appeared, when the door opened, and in came Mr Ramsay.

Mrs Allen endeavored to hide her tears, and stooping suddenly over the fire so as to receive a cloud of smoke, she wiped her eyes hastily, and muttered something unintelligible about a smoky house. Mr Roper received his neighbor with a smile; but it was obvious that the other gentleman was not so well pleased with the rencounter. He cleared his throat and took out his pocket handkerchief, while the bustling widow prepared a seat for him in the warmest corner. "I am come to see you Mrs Allen," said Mr Ramsay, "to tell you of a very advantageous situation for your son Paul. A gentleman of my acquaintance is in need of a young man as a bar-keeper at his public house, and if you do not object, it will be a genteel, as well as a profitable place for your son. I know that you are well born, Mrs Allen, and I have always respected the decent pride which makes decayed gentry hold up their heads. Your son ought to go into some situation in which he may remember his ancestors without being afraid of disgracing them.

The widow brightened up at this speech, and looked triumphantly at Mr Roper, though the calm dignity of his countenance again daunted her. "I thank you ten thousand times, Mr

Ramsay," said she, "you have always conducted yourself like a *real* born and bred gentleman towards me;" so saying she whined and held up her handkerchief to her eyes. "I will accept your offer, sir, most thankfully, and you shall have Paul directly."

"But Mrs Allen," said Mr Roper, determined to have one more trial before he relinquished his benevolent project, "Let us lay this business before Mr Ramsay, and ask his advice." He then proceeded to inform Mr Ramsay of the plan he had just concerted for Paul, dwelling much upon the advantages of such a situation to a young man without better prospects. "But sir," said Mr Ramsay with a sneer, "you forget that this lad is well descended. His mother has known better days, and it becomes us in common delicacy to remember this circumstance. Upon my honor, sir, this is my view of the case." Now Mr Ramsay looked so mischievous, not to say malicious, as he made this speech, that Mr Roper became suddenly aware of his intention. He felt truly concerned that one whom he had so sedulously endeavored to conciliate, should place himself as it were in an attitude of defiance before him. The truth was, that Mr Roper's grandfather had been overseer for one of the prodigal Highterflyters, in whose employment he had honestly laid up a genteel competency. This fortune had been greatly increased by the sons to whom he had bequeathed

it. One of them, the father of Mr Roper, had embarked a part of his capital in commerce, in which pursuit he had met with eminent success. Thus, by a common and natural turn of affairs, the rich had wasted their substance, and the industrious poor had amassed wealth in their turn.

Mr Roper became immediately sensible that Mr Ramsay had these circumstances in his thoughts when he alluded to family pride. He therefore smiled good humoredly when he said, "I cannot be reasonably expected to admit your reasoning, Mr Ramsay, for my ancestors were poor honest men, who made the fortune I now possess, by their industry. Neither can I be expected to object to the trade or business of overseer, because my grandfather was, (if I have been rightly informed,) in this very employment with one of Mrs Allen's ancestors."

"This frank declaration utterly disconcerted Mr Ramsay, who had boasted in secret of his knowledge of these derogatory circumstances; and endeavored to make people believe that Mr Roper intended to conceal them from his neighbors. The widow too, felt awkwardly; but before either of them could speak, Mr Roper civilly took leave, telling the widow that if she should on reflection prefer his offer to Mr Ramsay's, she must inform him—he added in an admonitory tone, "I think it my duty to let you know that your son will be in the way of what

has proved an irresistible temptation to many. Reflect, I pray you, before you put him in a situation where he may acquire an awful, soul-destroying habit."

The next day Mr Roper saw Paul in the streets of Eastburn, and learnt from him with real regret, that his mother had determined to accept Mr Ramsay's offer. The poor boy was in great distress at this determination, and begged Mr Roper to endeavor to change his mother's intentions with regard to him; but that kind hearted gentleman knew this attempt would be unavailing. He therefore comforted Paul, and gave him a great deal of good advice, all which the warm hearted boy listened to with tears in his eyes. "At length he sobbed out a few words of acknowledgment, and proceeded to promise Mr Roper that he would not touch a drop of spirituous liquors. "I wont, indeed sir, for fear I should be overcome by temptation!" "That's my brave boy," said Mr Roper, rejoiced in his heart at this resolution. "Touch not, taste not, handle not," I see will be your motto; farewell, Patient Paul, I am sure you will prosper. Read your Bible and pray often, and your lot will yet be a pleasant one on earth, or I'm greatly mistaken." Poor Paul went the next day to take leave of his patron, and wept a flood of tears over the hand that presented him a neat pocket Bible, and a plain edition of Dodridge's Rise and Progress, &c.

Mr Roper was not easily wearied in well doing. He made another effort to rescue the widow Allen's family from perdition. With great entreaty he prevailed on her to allow Joseph, her darling, to go to school at his house. Mrs Allen acquiesced in this proposition as if she was conferring, instead of receiving a favor. Indeed she had a strange habit of fancying that people were intruding on her good nature, when they undertook to do any thing for herself or her children. She was accustomed to talk as if she was still a person of consequence; and whenever she could get a patient auditor, there was no end to her details of former greatness. Often, when Joey was at school, and old Mingo sat on the steps, making brooms, would she stop the wheel, and stand with a long thread in her hand, shewing how her mother used to courtesy, as she entered a room.

Patient Paul found his new mode of life any thing but agreeable. Nevertheless, he endured its discomforts heroically, and strove to win friends for himself in the little village where he was living. He inviolably adhered to his promise of never touching liquor, and this immovable sobriety made him an object of respect with some, and mockery with others. Things went on passably with him for a year; his greatest troubles arising from the difficulty he found in attending to the one thing needful, in the midst of noise and dissipation. Often would he pore

over his Bible by torch light, however, when he at length got permission to retire from the busy scene of his daily labors. His greatest satisfaction during his year's service, arose from two or three accidental meetings with Mr Roper. These brief interviews were cordials to his weary spirit.

One day Mr Roper was passing by the widow Allen's cottage, without any intention of calling in, when he heard such shrieks of distress, that compassion induced him to change his mind, and enter the house for a moment. He found old Mingo at the threshhold, wringing his withered hands, and exclaiming in deep agony. "Oh my child! my child! what could make my dear good Paul do such a vile thing." The widow was almost beside herself, she screamed, threw her arms up with frantic gestures. "Vile, vile, deceitful wretch!" said she, "to dishonor his ancestors by such an act. Oh why did not the ghosts of the Highterflyters, rise up to hold his murderous hand. There sir," said she appealing to Mr Roper. "There is the boy you made so much of. 'Twas you that spoilt him. When you come into this neighborhood, he was kept back properly, but *you* brought him forward, and now see what has come of it. He has committed murder in a drunken frolic and is in jail, to be tried for his life. Oh miserable mother that I am!"

Mr Roper was so shocked that he could

scarcely attend to the reproaches so ungratefully hurled upon his head. He quitted the house after telling the wretched mother that he would ride over immediately and see Paul, that he might hear the truth of this melancholy story.

On his way homeward he met Mr Ramsay, of whom he anxiously inquired, as to the truth of this terrible report he had just heard. "Yes! yes!" said that gentleman calmly, "'tis all true, sir, the boy was a born and bred villain, I always thought he would turn out badly, before you knew him; and truly he has justified my suspicions. He has done for himself now, either the gallows or the penitentiary, one or the other, will be his doom. I'm sorry for the mother, for she is a half or quarter of a lady by birth." "Suppose you go with me to see the poor lad," said Mr Roper, "I'm just going home for my horse, and we will ride together." "Who, I!" said Mr Ramsay, "truly I shall neither make nor meddle with the fellow now, I did what I could for him, and you see how he has requited me—take my advice, and let him alone."

But the benevolent heart of Mr Roper throbbed at this instant with the deepest sympathy. He hastened to mount his horse, after informing his family of the cause of his sudden departure. After a ride of four hours he found himself in the village where poor Paul resided. He called first at the public house, where he heard the same tale of horror which had reached Eastburn.

The tavern keeper was still foaming with wrath, and declaring that the murdered man was his best and most particular friend. The only person who seemed at all to take part with Paul, was the waiter at the tavern, a mulatto man with a very intelligent countenance. From this man Mr Roper heard a connected story, the purport of which was, that Paul was serving a half drunk customer in the bar, when a dreadful uproar ensued, which summoned every one to the spot. On entering the bar-room, Paul was discovered with his hand grasping a knife, the blade of which was buried in the bosom of the poor drunken wretch, from whose hands an untasted glass of whisky had just fallen. The knife was known to be Paul's, nor did he himself deny that it was his property. He had been seen also to sharpen it that very morning, when the tavern keeper's son had jestingly asked, "who are you going to kill, Paul?"

Mr Roper, after hearing these circumstances, went straight way to the jail, where Patient Paul was confined. He found him calm and composed; for Paul had seldom enjoyed so much leisure for reading and prayer, as his confinement afforded him. He put his hand to his eyes when he saw Mr Roper: but apparently his fortitude had been elevated so as to stand the test of meeting with his benefactor, for he soon looked steadily upward; and then rested his calm eye upon his friend. "Paul" said Mr Roper,

as he grasped his fettered hand, "this hand *could* not have been held out to *me* in this manner, had it been stained with blood." 'Heaven bless you for those words sir,' said Paul, 'for they are the only kind ones I have heard since they thought proper to put me in this place.' 'What is the truth of this business, Paul. Let me hear it from you; don't be afraid to acknowledge to me that you found temptation too strong for you. It has proved so for others before you, and I do confidently believe myself, that Satan gains more souls by whisky, than by any other of his diabolical agents!' "He has stood no chance to gain mine that way, sir," said Paul, firmly. "If they were the last words I have to say, Mr Roper, I would declare to you, that this poison has never crossed the threshhold of my lips. No, sir! Believe me when I assert this fact." 'I do! I do believe you, my poor fellow,' said Mr Roper; 'but tell me about this horrid affair.'

'Who was the real murderer, and how came your knife to be in the wound?' 'Oh, sir! I wish I could tell you *who* the murderer is; but this much I will acknowledge to you, that as he whisked out of the window, he dropped this book, which you may look at. I was just pouring out a dram for poor Higgins, the murdered man, and had, as chance would have it, opened my knife to cut my nails, as I was at leisure just then, when a man burst in at the open window, snatched up the knife, and buried it in poor

Huggins' breast, before I had the least notion of what he meant to do. I screamed for help, as poor Higgins fell with his whole weight upon me. When the people of the house came in, I had just laid my hand on the haft of the knife. The man who stabbed him was masked, and wrapped from head to foot in a dark cloak.'

The book which Paul put into Mr Roper's hands, was a volume of Dryden's Comedies, with the name of the tavern keeper's son on the title page. Upon further conversation with the prisoner, Mr Roper learnt, that this young man was utterly abandoned in his principles, though he had not yet thrown off all regard to decency. Paul had repeatedly endeavored to inspire his thoughts with better subjects than those connected with his infamous pursuits: but these attempts had been utterly unsuccessful, and had, besides, excited the fierce resentment of the wicked young man against him.

The very day before the murder, the tavern keeper's son had asked Paul to let him draw a part of his wages as a loan. This request had been firmly refused, while the moral and religious youth made another attempt to arrest the course of the prodigal. Young Stephens, (the youth in question,) was violently enraged, and threatened Paul with his vengeance, if he continued to preach to him in such an impertinent manner. Just at this crisis, Higgins entered, and Stephens appealed to him for the same sum

of money. Higgins refused him roughly, and taunted him with reproaches for his dissolute course. 'You are throwing yourself away, Stephens,' said he, 'and that will soon be seen! you are going to the devil as fast as you can!' 'and pray where are *you* going?' asked Stephens, with a tremendous oath. "Mind your own manners before you preach to me, you villain." A struggle instantly ensued, in which Stephens got the better; but Paul and the mulatto servant succeeded in separating the combatants before serious mischief could happen. This was all the light that could be thrown on this dark transaction. Mr Roper was convinced that Stephens was the murderer, but how to bring him forward and convict him, was the difficulty.

Patient Paul declared himself willing to leave his fate entirely in the hands of his Heavenly Father. "*He* will not let me suffer, I am sure, for a crime that He knows me to be innocent of," said the poor boy. "I am not afraid to trust every thing to Him. Don't trouble yourself about the matter, Mr Roper, you have had trouble enough about me already. You have taught me who to trust in; and I need fear nothing while He is with me. Believe me, this dark, cold, cell, is a Paradise to me, compared to that poisonous den, in which so much of my time has been spent. I had rather remain here all my life, than return to that sink of abomination, the bar-room of a tavern. Oh! my dear

sir, the only friend I have had in this place has been a poor despised negro. Tom is a christian, and all the others are infidels. I have found more comfort in associating with that mulatto man, than I can express in words.

Mr Roper returned home much touched and edified with the demeanor of Patient Paul.—But he nevertheless exerted himself in every way his ingenuity could devise, to establish the poor boy's innocence. In this work of charity he was unaided except by one person whose aid was thought too insignificant to be accepted.—This was poor Tom, the mulatto servant at the Tavern.

The time was fast approaching for the trial of the poor unfriended boy whose fate was looked upon as inevitable. Mr Roper was indefatigable in his researches, and his whole family felt the keenest anxiety on the subject.

One evening just as the sun was setting, Mr Roper was surprised by a visit from Tom the mulatto. This faithful friend of the innocent came charged with a secret mission to Mr Roper. No doubt Mr Ramsay, and others like him, would have started with contempt, had they witnessed the serious attention paid to this poor man by a person of so much importance in society, as good Mr Roper; but *real goodness* is a rare quality in this world. People think it beneath their dignity to be merely *good*, they would like better to be *great*. But Mr

Roper remembered who it was that said to Moses, "I will cause all my *goodness* to pass before you." If the Almighty himself descends from his greatness to be good; it surely behoves his people to follow his example. Few hearts throbbed with purer emotions than Mr Roper's did the morning that he set out to visit the Town where Paul was confined.

On his arrival at the village of ——, Mr Roper paid a visit to his unfortunate charge. He found Patient Paul in the same enviable frame of mind in which he had left him. He was in a state of obvious preparation for the great change of situation which probably awaited him. He assured Mr Roper that the time he had spent in a dungeon had been the happiest of his life, for he had been able to devote himself without reserve to the study of the Scriptures. "Now," said he, "come what will, I have fortified my soul with heavenly armour. Words of sweet meaning are always rising in my memory, so that even my sleep is blessed with holy thoughts. But there is one thing that troubles me yet, and oh, Mr Roper, that is the condition of my poor mother. Many a prayer do I put up for her daily and nightly; for her case is a sad one, Mr Roper. She thinks she is in the right, and human reason cannot persuade her that she is not. Oh what a strange sort of religion her's is; she talks about it when religious people come to her house, and she can

talk very well, unfortunately. She has caught up a general knowledge of Scripture history, and that she calls religion. Alas! she deceives others; but that is not so bad as her self-deceit. Could I once see her humbled to the dust, I should have hopes that in time she would come to be exalted. But let no body suppose that poor people cannot be proud. And let no body be flattered with the idea of *proper pride;* you may as well talk of *proper dishonesty*, or *proper bloody mindedness*. No! there is no sort of pride admissible in the sight of God!

While Paul conversed in this manner, Mr Roper was pleased to see a fellow prisoner pay particular attention to him. This man was in jail on a suspicion of having burnt and robbed a gentleman's barn. He had been caught upon the roof of a stable adjoining the barn, while the uproar of the flames confounded every voice, so that his defence could not be heard. This man had associated intimately with Paul during his imprisonment; and the patient sufferer had imparted to him, much of his knowledge on sacred subjects.

The day of trial at length arrived, and Paul's companion was first brought forward, and promptly acquitted. Afterwards poor Paul was placed at the bar of justice, and commanded to speak for himself. As he looked around he saw many a scowling brow bent as it were in wrath and ill will, upon him; but he re-

collected the case of the Apostle Paul, who was thankful for being permitted to speak for himself, and his courage rose higher than he had anticipated. When the usual question was put to him, "guilty or not guilty?" He replied with a firm voice, "not guilty, gentlemen, of the awful crime of murder." Tut, said the tavern keeper aside to his next neighbor, "the boy is going to play the hypocrite with us. He was always canting in the bar room, and he will find such lingo as much out of place here as there, I warrant you—I dont suppose the judge has looked into a Bible these ten years, and this I know, he always runs up a swinging bill for liquors at my house.—'Twas but last night, I overheard him and a few jovial Lawyers over a bottle of my best wine, ridiculing all Temperance Societies as they are called, and wishing devoutly that all water drinkers might die of a dropsy." "But let us listen to the court," whispered his neighbor, after giving a nod of approbation to this jovial anecdote of the judge and lawyers.

The court then examined the coroner's inquest, and the witnesses on the part of the commonwealth. Mr Ramsay was present, and he was asked what was the character of the prisoner previous to his coming (at his recommendation to the village.) This gentleman coolly replied, after tapping his snuff-box, "that the boy was unpromising from infancy, and never

had given his mother any satisfaction. But that a gentleman in the neighborhood whose judgment was much respected, had patronized him for some years. That in consequence of hearing that Paul stood high in the opinion of this gentleman, (Mr Roper) he, Mr Ramsay, had been induced to procure the place for him, in which he had so lamentably misbehaved himself. Mr Ramsay then calmly declared that he would not interfere in behalf of one so obviously guilty of an infamous crime. I am too good a citizen, I trust, to interfere with my country's Laws, therefore let the prisoner be surrendered to justice.

The witnesses against the prisoner were the tavern keeper and his son. The young man came forward with a stupid, dull countenance, very different from his usual audacity of manner. He looked haggard and confounded, yet notwithstanding gave a straight forward evidence against Paul. He affirmed that he was passing by the window of the bar-room, when he looked in casually, and saw the fatal blow given; that he rushed forward, but too late to arrest the stroke. The father gave a fuller and clearer account of his own view of the subject, all which tended to criminate the unfortunate youth.

Several persons took notice of young Stephens deportment, and whispered their various conjectures to each other. "The lad is mazed

said one." "No! no!" said another, "he's half drunk, that's all," "ay, and the other half too, to my thinking," said another, "look how the blood rushes over his face, and see now how deadly pale he is; saw you ever the like neighbors?"

These observations were indeed drawn from the dullest person present, by the scene that was acting before them. *The book* was put into young Stephen's hand to make oath to what he had asserted; as it was raised from the table a bloody cloth fell to the ground, which had been concealed by the ponderous volume. Young Stephens started, "what is that," said he, "that's my handkerchief, I'll swear." "You had better not own it," whispered his father. But Providence had ordained that the guilty should betray himself to justice. Young Stephens, who had been drinking hard to prepare himself for the terrible part he had to act, now looked around with an idiotic stare.

The last dram he had swallowed had been too much for his intellects; and the last stage of drunkenness (raving imbecility,) was now coming over him. He had carefully tempered his own drink during the day, being well aware of the exact quantity necessary to give him brutal courage without oversetting his reason. But honest Tom had exchanged the tempered draughts for raw spirit, thinking this a very fair retaliation of fraud for fraud.

Young Stephens now proclaimed his title to the bloody handkerchief loudly, with many horrible oaths which we beg leave to omit.—"'Tis mine," said he, "for there are the very marks of my bloody fingers, I wiped my hands in haste, when every body was running to the bar room. I threw that cloth in the river, but some witch has brought it here to convict me of murder; never mind! what harm is there in taking away the life of a drunkard? none, that I see, for drunkards commit murder every day." The court now moved to have the wretched man confined until his drunkenness had passed away; but Mr Roper rose and addressed the magistrates in the following manner. "Gentlemen, I ask leave to give you what lights I have myself been able to collect on this intricate piece of villainy. Here is the respectable citizen who caught the bloody cloth as young Stephens threw it into the river. He is not afraid to testify on oath, that he heard him exult in having rid himself of a troublesome rival. The same gentleman is ready to swear that his daughter has been addressed for the last six months by young Stephens and the deceased (Higgins) at the same time. He has more than once prevented violent quarrels between the rivals; and the same day on which the murder was committed he heard Stephens declare that he meant to murder Higgins the first time he could do so without suspicion, or risk of dis-

covery. The wretched youth has been unable to quiet the raging of conscience. I myself was one of four respectable gentlemen who watched beside his guilty bed last night, and heard him raving in purturbed slumber, about this murder. He fancied himself in that awful place of punishment appointed for the wicked, and addressed his wretched associates in such terms as I wish never to hear again from human organs. Alas! that man should thus brutify himself with liquor, when its dangers are so apparent, and such hideous consequences are daily flowing from this soul-destroying vice." After this speech of Mr Roper's, the witnesses in behalf of the prisoner were brought forward. There was profound silence in the court while their examination lasted. After it was over, the jury was not long in giving in their verdict, not guilty. The wretched youth who really committed the murder, was carried to prison in a state of raving insanity. From this he never entirely recovered, and his days were closed in a lunatic hospital.

Paul accompanied his true friend home, and had the satisfaction of finding his mother humbled indeed with a sense of the injustice she had committed towards Mr Roper. In process of time she became an altered woman, and ten years after these transactions, she was living with Paul in an excellent house provided for him by his unchangeable friend Mr Roper.

She had forgotten all about her high born ancestors, and submitted thankfully to her son's establishment, as Overseer, upon Mr Roper's estate. Here she grew old and contented, and to the last of her life blessed Mr Roper for his unshaken friendship. *He* is a truly good man, she used to say, who perseveres gently, but firmly in reforming his fellow creatures. If every body were to give over this work because it requires *patience*, there would be but little good done in this world that needs so much.

A TALE.

DEBT AND DANGER; OR THE PLAID DRESS.

"MARTHA, what are you buying there, my child?" said Mrs Swinton to her daughter, who was busy with a flushed cheek and sparkling eyes, trafficking with a pedlar.

"Oh nothing but a bodkin and some other trifles," (the last clause of the sentence in a whisper,) "that I have wanted, mother, you know, this long time."

Martha Swinton was a very pretty girl whose parents were poor, but honest trades people in the little village of Neverseek. Her mother was very infirm; and Martha had been brought up to attend to the younger children as if they had been her own offspring. Every morning she washed and dressed little Betty and Fanny, and the last thing she did after supper was to look over their clothes, and see if they had torn them in the course of the day. One evening, just as Martha had seated herself to this work, with her needle and shears, a young man called at the house with a message to Mr Swinton. He was a very likely youth, indeed, and one who was likely to do well in the world from

his industry and sobriety. His parents had brought him up in the fear of the Lord, and his conduct, since he began the world for himself, had proved that he had not forgotten their instructions. On this evening, when he saw a blooming, beautiful girl, acting the part of mother to her young sisters, his heart filled with some new feeling, while his judgment fully approved her conduct. He looked at her during the whole time of supper, which happened to be served up just as he entered. She blushed, as she took the head of the table, and after helping her sick mother to the choicest of every thing, she proceeded to attend to the rest of the party. There was an ingenuous modesty in her air that pleased young Hilton not a little, and he could scarcely take his eye from her face, while he spoke to her father. Mr Swinton slyly noticed this circumstance, and rejoiced in his heart at the prospect of a growing attachment between the two meritorious young people.

But to return to the scene at which we commenced our story. Mrs Swinton, though confined to her easy chair in the corner, kept an anxious eye on her daughter. She had of late noticed a change in Martha, for which she could not account. Instead of her former steadiness of demeanor, there was a lightness, not to say levity, which was on many accounts displeasing to her; and now, she saw plainly, that her

daughter's eye, if not her heart, was set upon some of the finery exhibited by the Pedlar.

"Martha, my child, bring me a draught of water," said Mrs Swinton in a faint voice. "Here Fanny," said Martha, "take the mug steadily to mother, there's a good girl." Again the anxious mother made an attempt to attract her daughter's attention from the Pedlar's hoards. "Martha, come here directly, child, I want you immediately." Now Martha was in the outer room of the cottage while her mother sat in her easy chair in the inner apartment. But the door was ajar in the true Virginia fashion, and every thing was distinctly seen and heard within. And here, if the reader will excuse us, we will remark upon this universal custom of open doors among the people of Virginia. No matter what the degree of cold may be, the doors are kept yawning wide throughout the winter, as if to accommodate the canine dependants of the family, who thus find their intercourse with the human inmates greatly facilitated.

On this occasion, however, this custom proved convenient to the infirm mother, who was enabled to mark the fluctuations of her daughter's countenance, so as to give a guess at what was passing in her mind.

Martha hastened to attend her mother's second summons; when the kind hearted parent

almost hesitated to speak the rebuke that her judgment dictated.

"Martha, my child! remember the maxim which has been taught you from your very infancy, "Debt is always followed by danger—oh Martha, don't buy a single thing that you can't pay for on the spot."

"But mother," said Martha, "if I have money owing to me, may I not spend it to day." "Who owes you my child?" "One who will be sure to pay mother, as sure as he is alive." "Aye Martha! and how sure is life my child? even the lives of the young and healthy hang but by a thread; you had better stick to the letter of the law, and not exceed it even in the merest trifle. Remember how the smallest errors sometimes lead to the greatest consequences. You cannot want any thing in the pedlar's pack, so much as you would want a quiet conscience, if you were once to know the evil of being without that blessing. While you deserve and possess the love and confidence of your parents, you are happier in your coarsest homespun, than you could be in satin and velvet without these blessings. Don't run in debt my child, for if you do, you can only make yourself easy by smothering the pleadings of conscience; and God forbid that my child should ever be happy in that way."

Martha listened with a deepening color to these sensible remonstrances, and after they

were over, she calmly returned and told the pedlar that he might put up his goods for she should purchase no more. "What!" said the travelling merchant, "don't you mean to buy this plaid? Miss Lucy Adams told me you had engaged to divide the piece with her, and unless you purchase a dress of it, I shall not cut it for her. There is just enough to make one dress for a tall person, and one for a low person, so you and Miss Lucy would do exactly to go together. She is as much below the common size as you are above it."

All this reasoning tingled in Martha's ears, for it agreed precisely with her pre-arranged plan of proceedings. Lucy Adams was a foolish, flighty, good tempered girl, who lived next door to the Swintons. Her father was a widower, and his daughter had been educated principally by a mulatto woman, who had the care of her deceased mistresses family. The poor girl was to be pitied for this misfortune, and Martha Swinton *did* pity her most cordially.—But though she was at first fully sensible of Lucy's faults, she became every day less and less conscious of them. So true it is, that habit reconciles us to many improper practices, and even vice loses its hideousness when steadily contemplated every day.

Martha Swinton was not acquainted with many of the improprieties committed by her companion. Lucy had learnt to practice a

great deal of art; and to conceal such things as she was afraid would make Martha blame her. Her father was a weak, well meaning man, who, finding his family kept snugly and neatly by Jenny Jenks, the mulatto woman, was well enough satisfied with her management. His wife had been a terrible shrew, and his temper being naturally meek, he had sunk into a state of quiet vassalage from which he was only released by the death of his tyrant. From this time till Lucy grew up, every thing went on smoothly, and he thought every thing must, therefore, be going on well. This is no uncommon mistake. People are apt to imagine that all is well when there is no commotion; but silent evils are sometimes the deepest, as was exemplified in Mr Adam's family.

The evening after the Pedlar's visit, Mrs Swinton was rather better than usual. Her spirits too were considerably revived, probably by the dutiful and prudent conduct of her daughter. Martha had recovered from her disappointment, and was very busy preparing things for the next day which was to be the Holy Sabbath. It was the custom of this godly family, to get every thing in such order on Saturday evening, that there could be no excuse for doing any kind of work on Sunday. Mrs Swinton had discovered that sweet potatoes were better the day after they were baked. It was her custom just to lay them on the clean

hearth to toast a short time before dinner. She found, too, that most tap-rooted vegetables, such as parsnips, and beets, and carrots, were better heated over again, than they were on the first day.

Mr Swinton was a Stone Mason, and he was now employed in building a stone mill dam, for a neighboring gentleman. But he generally came home to a late dinner on Saturday, and his wife and daughters were now waiting for him, (and his son who worked with him) to share their usually late Saturday's dinner.

Martha had laid the cloth, and cut the bread; the hearth was swept as clean as possible, and the children's Sunday clothes, (all neatly mended) were hung on a chair to air. Fanny and Betty were getting their lessons for the Sabbath School, and their mother was reading to herself in the book of books.

The door opened, and in came the father and son, as was expected; but along with them came one who was not expected—namely young Joseph Hilton. This youth had dropt in once or twice before, and set a few minutes at a time. Sometimes his errand was to bring some little nice article of diet to the invalid, and sometimes to bring large banquets of wild flowers to the children. But this was the first day that he had come with the intention of making a regular visit, and Martha's heart beat audibly as she gave him her hand to welcome him, after being

folded to the bosoms of her father and brother. The meal was seasoned with rational discourse and harmless pleasantry. Their food was good, substantial ham and cabbage, with a dish of savoury broth for the invalid, and a plenty of well dressed vegetables and corn hoe-cake. The drink was father Adam's beverage, pure and wholesome water; for Mr Swinton never allowed a drop of spirituous liquor in the house, except what was in his poor sick wife's camphor bottle.

"Well Joseph my lad," said the farmer, after finishing his meal with a hearty draught from the neat looking gourd, "Here's your very good health, and I question much whether the President of the United States, has a happier circle around his table to-day than mine. I'm heartsome to see the good woman able to join us, and hope the Lord will be merciful to us, and raise her up from the wearisome bed of sickness for some time longer." "That's as *He* pleases husband," said Mrs Swinton. "All's for the best you know according to our maxim. Perhaps if I had'nt had this tedious sickness, I should never have found out the extent of my husband's and children's kindness to me. As it is, I am always thanking heaven for my good luck in this world. Besides, if I had been up and about all this time, our Martha would never have had an opportunity of becoming so handy in household matters. I do really think if I

was to be taken from you, John, you would hardly miss me, now Martha has grown up so clever." "Hush dame," said Mr Swinton, "none of that talk if you love me. You know well enough that a hundred daughters would never supply your place to me. But I am thankful to you, for all that, for having trained the damsel up so nicely; she'll make some worthy man as happy in a wife, as you've made me, and that will be seen by us both, I hope." This last speech was made in an under tone, as Martha was busy in putting away the things after dinner. Her father's eyes followed her with delight as she tripped gracefully about the room. She put away the dinner for the next day, separating the meat from the vegetables, and setting every thing aside in the large cupboard. Then she sent little Fanny to carry the old negro woman who lived in the kitchen, her dinner on a bright pewter plate. After the table was removed, Martha resumed her work, sitting in the corner by her mother, and the little girls again went to their Sabbath lessons. Their father called them up and asked them questions on their lessons, giving them such instructions as they needed; mingled with injunctions to be always in time for the opening of the school; and to be very attentive to their teachers. "Never turn your head round from your books when any one enters the room. That is a very ugly practice which some children have—but I hope

my little lassies know better than to behave so."

Saturday night had closed in, and the moon was shining brightly, when a little black girl ran over to Mr Swinton's, to beg Miss Martha to step over in a hurry to Miss Lucy Adams. Martha was knitting away diligently when the message came, but she ran over immediately with her work in her hand. The house in which Mr Adam's lived, was a very old building, considerably out of repair, and the bad order in which the furniture appeared, gave it an air of still greater discomfort.

Jenny Jenks was good tempered and lazy, so that things were barely endurable under her jurisdiction; but she had to deal with one who cared for nothing but peace and quiet, so as we have said before, there was no remarkably good management in this cottage. At present the room in which the family sat was wofully out of order. Washing tubs and flat irons, old clothes, and dirty children, were mingled in terrible confusion. Lucy herself was in her most untidy costume, having on a very dirty homespun gown with several conspicuous rents in it; and an old silk handkerchief round her neck, that had once been black, but was now of a foxy red.

Martha looked round some time before she could find a seat; but at last her friend got her accommodated with a precarious seat upon the water bench. Lucy seemed to be as much dis-

composed in mind as person: "And so Martha," said she, "you have cheated me about the plaid dress!" "*Cheated!*" exclaimed Martha reddening, "you use strange words Lucy." "No more strange than true, Miss Martha Swinton—here's mammy Jenny to witness that you promised to join me in buying that piece of plaid from Norvel, the Pedlar—did'nt she mammy?" "To be sure and sartain, Miss," said Jenny, "I did somehow understand a siflication between you consarning the piece of store truck." "Why Jenny," said Martha blushing, for she could not help considering her own conduct in a blameable light, "I did indeed want the plaid very much, and if I *could* have afforded to purchase it, I should certainly have done so. But I had not the money by me, and something might have happened to prevent me from getting it before Mr Norvel wanted it—my mother too advised me not to run in debt even for a trifle. She says it is a bad habit to get into; and ever since I can remember, I have heard father say an old fashioned rhyme about, 'ever be a stranger to debt and danger.' You can't think how this notion runs in my head, that 'debt and danger,' are inseparable companions.

You must forgive me Lucy, I can't buy the dress indeed; but surely Mr Norvel can be persuaded to cut the piece for you." "No he can't," said Lucy, disconsolately. "He won't do it, I know, and I shall loose my chance of

getting a beautiful new dress, just because of your changeableness." "I am sorry for you Lucy, but I can't help you indeed." "Indeed but you can though, if you'll only just change your mind upon the spot, and let mammy run over and get the piece of plaid. Norvel is just over at the tavern." "But Lucy, I have already changed once, and surely it would be doubly foolish for me to change again. It is worse to change from right to wrong, too, than from wrong to right, you know." "Indeed I know no such thing; it can't be wrong to do a good natured thing, and help a friend in distress." "Surely Lucy, you are not in *real* distress for this gown. I know you have two or three new ones." "Well but Miss," said Jenny Jenks. "Young ladies now-a-days have a vast many dresses, and so they ought. My Miss Lucy has set her fancy upon this petikler truck, and sure you would'nt cross a friend's fancy. No! that's what no well behaved young lady would do. Suppose some body was to take away your sweetheart, young Joey Hilton? would'nt you take it unkindly? Ah, ha! see how she blushes! well sure enough I've hit the nail on the head, and found a mare's nest."

Lucy laughed heartily at the delicate wit of her governess, as she might well be called. But Martha was proof against raillery and persuasion both. She had already repented of her silly anxiety to get the dress in question, and so

well ordered was her young mind, that she had ceased to desire it, as soon as she had taken time to consider seriously.

If young women would take time to think over both sides of a question, they would be spared many sufferings; but they too often hurry blindly on; looking but on one side, and resolutely closing their minds to the convictions of reason, if those convictions happen to contradict their inclinations.

Many a girl has wrought herself into a perfect fury of impatience to possess a thing, not really intrinsically worth having: but owing all its attractions to her own imagination. Martha's mother had a skilful way of leading her children to practice self-denial. She would find out what they particularly wanted, or what, according to Jenny's phraseology, they had set their fancies on. Then she would draw them out to tell her all their expectations of gratification from possessing the object of their desires. After which, she would depreciate the thing desired as much as possible, until she led them to relinquish it, from their own convictions of its unsuitableness. For the further benefit of our young readers, we will give a fuller account of Mrs Swinton's method, by stating a case at length.

When Martha was about 7 years old, she was smitten with a violent desire to possess a waxen doll. She had seen a beautiful one in a store, and her imagination seemed to dwell on it in-

cessantly. Her father had given her money enough on Christmas day to purchase the doll; but her judicious mother wished to wean her, if possible, from her violent prepossession. Thinking, doubtless, that this self-conquest in childhood, would pave the way to future and more important victories over self-will. 'Martha,' said she, 'what makes you prefer this doll to a wooden one?' 'Oh, mother! because it is so natural; so like to a flesh and blood baby. This great wooden block a'nt abit like a child.' 'Well, but Martha, the true use of a doll baby is to teach little girls to make clothes—they cut out and fit for their babies, and then, when they grow up, they know how to cut and fit for themselves. Now this waxen doll is, I grant, a great deal prettier than the wooden one, and as you say, a great deal more like a real child. But it is so soft and easy to break, that you wont be able to turn and twist and throw it about as you would wish. Only just wait one week, and think over every day what I tell you, and if at the week's end, you still want the waxen doll, you shall have it.'

Martha listened to her mother, and at the appointed time made choice of the wooden doll. Her mother commended her for her discretion; and not long after, took occasion to shew her the waxen doll when the summer heats had melted it almost away. "You see now, my child, that your own doll is as good as ever,

while this is entirely spoiled. Now remember this case as long as you live; and when you are tempted to desire any thing ardently, try to reason yourself out of your partiality, and determine to be satisfied with something else than the object you desire. This will insure you to the practise of self-denial, and teach you besides to argue on both sides of a question, before you make up your mind which side to adopt. A great deal of the folly committed in this world, arises from the too common habit of confining one's self exclusively to one view of a subject, and that one perhaps adopted from caprice, rather than reason. But to return from this digression.

Martha continued resolute not to purchase the dress she had so ardently desired to possess in the morning. She even explained to her friend the method of reasoning, which had enabled her to get over an idle fancy. But all her honest eloquence was lost. At length, she recollected that Lucy had bought a dress very much resembling the one she now wanted, but a short time ago; and she exclaimed, 'Lucy, where is your blue and red plaid? you can't have worn it out yet.' 'Yes, but I have, though,' said Lucy. 'Its gone to the dogs long ago, has'nt it mammy?' 'Ay, my child,' said the hopeful Duenna, 'its gone sure enough; not quite as low as the dogs, but your poor old mammy has it. My child is a good child. She

gives her old nurse all her rags—what should I do without them, I wonder; I, who, for the credit of the family, has to go sort-a smart bout house, and 'bout town."

The truth was, that this artful old woman wheedled poor Lucy out of a great many things. Martha knew that she always was well provided with apparel, and yet her appearance was not always creditable. She would make up a new dress, and wear it a few times in credit; and then her precious mammy would contrive to spoil it in the washing, that she might beg it from her. Martha understood all this, and pitied her poor friend for the disadvantages under which she laboured. After again resolutely declining the purchase which had been so vehemently pressed upon her, she took leave and returned to her own happy home. Ah, thought she, as she crossed the little yard that separated the two houses, "how much cause have I for thankfulness. With such parents to instruct me; and such a quiet, neat, cheerful cottage to live in. What a situation is poor Lucy's! and oh! such might have been mine too, had not a merciful Being prevented it. What a contrast between the fire-side I am returning to, and the one I have left. Oh Lord! make me thankful for such unmerited blessings."

As Martha skipped lightly into the door of her father's house, she heard these words: "Ay! my Martha will make a wife that any man might

be thankful for." She knew that Joseph Hilton was one of the party; and her heart throbbed violently. Her heightened color almost betrayed her secret when she entered the room, but to her lover's eye she only seemed more lovely than usual. Joseph staid till ten o'clock, which was the good man's hour for family worship. After offering up fervent prayers at that household altar, at which he looked forward with the delightful hope of becoming a regular worshipper, the young man departed for his lodgings. As he walked through the calm moonlight, his thoughts reverted to the conversation which had just past, at the Stone Mason's Cottage. During Martha's short absence, her mother had narrated the little adventure of the morning. She dilated at length upon Martha's desire to make a purchase that pleased her taste; and her instantaneous and cheerful relinquishment of her wishes to gratify her mother. "She is indeed a precious child," said the Father, "and my heart is truly thankful to the giver of that and every other blessing. I'm thinking wife, that the dear child shall have a prettier gown than that, if I live to finish the job I am now about." Joseph said nothing; but he thought the more. His heart was warmed to the core, and his judgment completely satisfied. A dress! thought he, as the good father went on describing the present he intended to make his child; Ay, I too can purchase dresses, but how insignifi-

cant such things are, compared with ——. But just then Martha entered, and Joseph began to think that her beauty might be improved by tasteful dress. But the ardent lover was destined to undergo a change of feeling before his head pressed his pillow on Saturday evening.

As he passed near the little public house of the village, he recollected that his mother had requested him to purchase a few skeins of black silk for her. He knew that Norvel the pedlar had been in town, and concluded that he was at the inn. Accordingly he turned his steps that way, and entered the public room where some people were, still chaffering with the travelling merchant. Seeing the pedlar employed, he stepped aside till he should be more at leisure. Near the fire-place, stood a mulatto woman wrapt up in a large cloak, and apparently waiting for somebody. There were several persons near the table, among whom he recognized Mr Adams and his daughter Lucy. The young woman was herself higgling with the pedlar, who was measuring off a piece of stuff. After this operation was over, he folded up the cloth and gave it to Lucy, who handed it over to her attendant, Jenny Jenks. "Well," said the pedlar, "I must charge 6 yards to you and 8 to Miss Martha Swinton." "Yes, yes," said Lucy, "you know she agreed the other day to take the piece with me." "Ay, but she told me this

very morning that she had changed her mind." "Yes, but people that change their minds once, can change them again, you know. Martha was over to see me this evening, and I held her a long talk about her stinginess in wanting to put me off as she intended. I promise you, she was heartily ashamed of herself." So saying, the hopeful girl departed with her nurse, leaving her poor indolent, easy tempered father, almost unconscious that she had been in the room.

Poor Joseph departed too, but his heart had taken on board a cargo of lead. The words he had overheard had been burnt in, as if by fire, upon his memory. What made the matter worse, was, that Martha had been openly applauded by her father, on her return from Mr Adams's that night. He had folded her to his bosom, and praised her self-denial. All this she had borne without changing countenance, without exhibiting the smallest token that she was not in reality entitled to his praises. Oh! thought Joseph, can deceit be so habitual already! Has she practised it so long, that her features are not affected by such unmerited applause as she this night received from her father. Had there been a spark of truth in her, surely it would have betrayed her to her deceived parents this night. If she is thus hardened in deceit," thought he, "she is no wife for me! I will leave the country to morrow, and will not

return until this dream of happiness is forgotten. My heart rejoiced in having found a woman suited in every particular to my most fastidious judgment. But a deceiver! it may not, must not be! so farewell all thoughts of domestic happiness."

While poor Joseph is thus lamenting over his discovery of Martha Swinton's unworthiness, we will explain to the reader why he was thus able to accuse one so innocent of such a crime.

Martha had no sooner quitted the house of Lucy Adams, than the two women broke out in reproaches and abusive language. Lucy declared that Martha was actuated by fear of her father. She is a coward, and can't bear a hard word. I told her one day that she was afraid of her parents; and she answered in her hypocritical way, "No, Lucy, I am not afraid of *them;* they are too good and gentle for me to fear them; but I am afraid of doing *wrong;* and I trust I always shall be afraid of that." "Well, honey," said her eloquent companion, Jenny Jenks, "the short and the long of the matter is, that the gown you must *have;* I can't set down so, and see my darling disappointed." The truth was, that Jenny had wheedled Lucy into giving her all the pieces left of her gowns; and she did not like to give up this privilege. "You must have that plaid; so come along, go with me to the tavern, and just tell the pedlar

that Martha will join you in buying the piece; then bring it home, and I'll answer to sell the other dress pattern before pay-day comes. Such a pretty thing wont go a begging. I know half a dozen, who will be glad to take it."

Lucy sprang up in ecstacy at this proposal, and was soon equipped for sallying forth with her competent guardian. In her way, she encountered her father, who seemed inclined to chide a little; but Jenny silenced him, by a ready falsehood. "Miss Martha Swinton just stepped in, sir, to ask Miss Lucy, would she be so good as to buy a dress with her from the pedlar. He wont cut the piece for her, and Miss Lucy has lying money to pay for the other half, so the two young ladies has come to agreement to be dressed alike." "Very well," said the indolent father, "if Lucy has money to pay for it, I'm sure I don't care; only make haste back, for I don't approve of Lucy's walking out so late."

In trafficking with the pedlar, Lucy did not positively *tell* a falsehood, but she *implied* one, which is just as bad. But poor girl, she had been so miserably educated, that she thought this quite a spirited action. Jenny Jenks did not scruple to tell open falsehood; but she justified the practise by saying, that if she was to tell truth, nobody would believe her, a poor despised slave; so she went on in a wrong course, through an imaginary necessity; as a

great many people have done before her. Lucy jumped and skipped like a child, when the plaid was unfolded. "Oh," said she, "it will be beautiful, and when you sell the other part mammy, and I earn enough money to pay for my share, we'll just give it all together to Norvel, and he'll never be the wiser for it, and Martha will never know that we have used her name in the matter." With all Lucy's joy at having attained the gratification of her wishes, we question whether she was *half* as happy as Martha was, from having learnt to *deny herself* an improper indulgence.

A few days after this transaction, news arrived in the village, that Gen. La Fayette was about to pass through, on his way to visit Mr Jefferson, and the whole country was afloat on the occasion. All the gentlemen of importance formed themselves into a committee, as it was called, to arrange matters for doing honor to the Nation's friend. It was understood that all the old men who served in the revolutionary war, were to assemble together to meet the old General, under whom most of them had served as soldiers. There was a clamour indeed on this occasion, and every family suffered temporary derangement of some sort or other.

Mr Swinton was a great lover of quiet; but he had often heard his father talk over all the circumstances of the first war that America waged against her unnatural parent, Great

Britain. The old man had been immediately about the person of La Fayette, and used to describe the young, handsome, gallant soldier, in flourishing terms. Accordingly the Stone Mason, who had a great respect for the memory of his father, determined to do what honor he could to the great and good La Fayette.

He went out and purchased a beautiful dress for Martha. It was a very dark Canton crape, for he thought shewy things would be unbecoming the daughter of a tradesman. The Stone Mason had some very sensible opinions on matters and things in general. For instance, he used to affirm that it was a great folly for people not born and bred *genteelly*, to take the affectation of gentility upon them. "The *real* gentry," said he, "will ridicule us; and in fact, we shall feel ridiculous ourselves. 'Tis education that fits a person to shine in fashionable society, and all the shewy dress in the world won't make a woman look like a lady of education; I'm clear for keeping out of these follies. Many a fine girl has been ruined by having her head filled with foolish notions of dress and fashion. Even the very rich and the very genteel make fools of themselves by following the *fashion*, as it is called. For my part, I do not know what fashion is, unless it be like a Jack o' the Lanthorn, that leads people by its showy, deceitful light, into quagmires and marshes. But Martha, my child, make up your dress neatly: let it fit you

well, but don't put a scrap of flouncing or frilling on it. This is an age in which it may truly be said, 'that the nakedness of the indigent may be clothed from the trimmings of the vain.'—How the ladies do disfigure themselves by their knee deep flounces, and bushel bows of ribbon. Let a girl be ever so pretty, who can admire her, when she is tiffled off so foolishly, and shews such a wanton waste of what the poor are perishing for. But as for me, I never will let my daughters wear flounces, or feathers, or artificial flowers. They are good enough and handsome enough for me, without borrowing such frivolous things to improve them. So, Martha, see that your gown be made neatly, and don't put any trimming on it; I want to know you among hundreds by the simplicity of your appearance."

Martha had no desire to signalize herself by dressing like her betters. But there were few girls in the village who thought as she did on these matters.

One evening, while she was sitting silently at work upon her gown, and wondering in secret what Joseph had done with himself since the evening he came home with her brother and father; two or three of the village girls stepped in. They soon began to talk of the approaching festival, and begged Martha to shew them her *finery*; "I have nothing that deserves that name," said she, "but here is my dress." "Oh!

this is beautiful—but its rather too dark; however, with pink or yellow trimmings, it will be beautiful. Do you know Martha, that I have been to see the rich Misses *Shufflers*, and I have had a look at their La Fayette finery. Oh it is gloriously lovely, such a quantity of trimmings never did I see on one dress; red silk flounces above the knee, and all manner of parading things about the bosom and shoulders; I tried to catch the pattern by looking at it, (for the ladies won't give their patterns,) but 'twas quite impossible. Its my belief 'twould take a good long day's work to cut the shapes of all the pieces." "And oh Martha!" said another, "I've seen Miss Twaddler's bonnet—'tis no trifling object, I assure you. It put me in mind of what I read at school about the hanging gardens of Babylon—but I promise you mine will be a little like it. I have put on every bit of ribbon of different colors I could get, and had such a quarrel with sister Peggy about her green sash—only think, though she is lame and can't go, she did'nt want to lend me her ribbon—I promise you, I scolded her well before I got it." "Ay!" said one of her companions, "and you did worse than that. The poor thing is helpless as you know, and yet you threw her over, and hurt her a good deal." "Well! she had no business to refuse me her ribbon!" was the spirited reply. "I *will* be well dressed when La Fayette comes, that I will. Father is mon-

strous stingy, or he would have given me a bran spick-and-span new gown; but my pink scarlet is as good as new, and 'twill look like another dress when all the crimson flounces are put on. Martha, you can't think how cleverly I managed to get a pair of prunello shoes from Father. I pretended to have a sore foot, and said 'twas quite impossible for me to go, unless I had a pair of thin shoes; so, he had taken a drop too much that day, and he gave me money to buy the shoes, for says he, 'all my family shall meet the General, that they shall.'" Much more of this sort of talk passed, before the good family could get rid of their unpleasant visiters. Martha sighed when they went away;—she looked at her mother's pale face, and thought if it had not been for *her*, I too would have resembled these poor friendless girls.

The day at length came when the Nation's Guest was hourly expected at the village of Neverseek. The sun rose in gorgeous brightness, and all nature seemed to shine forth in new beauties to honor the occasion. Mrs Swinton felt so much better, as to be able to put on her black silk gown and worked cap, that she might sit in her easy chair at the window, to see the cavalcade pass by, and to get a glimpse of the General.

Every thing was sweetly tranquil in the well ordered cottage of the Stone Mason, though confusion and disorder reigned elsewhere.

John had been urged to spend the evening before at a tavern where some of the villagers assembled to get drunk in honor of Gen. La Fayette. But the honest tradesman excused himself in his blunt way, saying that he felt every disposition to honor the General, but he could not do so by wounding his own conscience, and injuring his health. "I dare not get drunk," said he, "for I have made a vow in the strength of the Lord against spirituous liquors; but my heart is light and my spirits gay, so that I am likely to pass a merrier day than if I should chance to get up with a head ache." The Stone Mason, therefore, spent a quiet evening at home, and had family worship at the usual hour.

The next morning he rose at the dawn of day, as was his custom, and admonished his family against being thrown into confusion. "It is a great mistake," said he, "to suppose that uncommon occurrences necessarily produce bustle and disorder. If they come unexpectedly, this may be the case; but we have had time enough to prepare for this frolic, so let's go about it soberly; none but ill ordered minds love confusion; it is their element, to be sure, and they must live in it, as some fish can live only in muddy waters. But for us, wife, who have been used to steadiness and order, let us keep up old customs with the help of the Lord." So saying, he went to work in his garden, saying he was not sorry to

have a leisure morning at home, as there was a good deal to do about the premises. "Let us never loose more time than is absolutely necessary," said he, "in our licensed past-times."

Martha Swinton went over to neighbor Adam's, after breakfast, to deliver a message from her father about some business between the two heads of families. Here she found, as usual, confusion upon confusion, in the ill arranged household. Lucy was tacking a lace tucker in her plaid dress, and she called upon Martha in some exultation to look at her beautiful gown. "So you got Norvel to cut the plaid, did you," said Martha. "I am very glad Lucy, that you have got what you wanted *honestly*." "Honestly! indeed," said Lucy in a pet; "bless me! did you think me capable of stealing." "Don't be angry, Lucy, I was thinking of myself when I said *honestly*. For you know it would not have been honest in me to have bought a dress, when I had no money to pay for it." "I don't know any such thing, Martha Swinton; people may run in debt honestly, when they *know* they can soon earn money to pay for what they buy." "That's what no one can be certain of, Lucy; I remember once running in debt for a shawl, because I was to receive the money in a month, for some socks that I was to knit for a gentleman in town, so I just asked a month's credit, and the very next day I was taken with a fever, and was not able

to touch a knitting needle for the whole month. My father paid the money to be sure, but he told me not to run in debt any more. Something or other may happen, said he, always to prevent your paying your debts in the time appointed, and it wounds your credit to be behind hand, even for a few days." Longer would Martha have harangued on this subject, but she recollected that she must run home, as her mother wanted her. Lucy was glad of her departure, for in spite of her bad habits, she could not deny the truth of every thing asserted by her friend. It is very painful to one's conscience to hear habits condemned by the wise and good, which we have unhappily suffered to acquire influence over us. We cannot help believing all we hear; but our minds are sore, and we cannot listen without flinching when those wounds are probed.

The hour at length approached for the arrival of General La Fayette. Martha had just time to dress herself, after working hard all the morning at the tavern, where many of the village girls were assembled to help the tavern keeper's wife in her preparations. We will not attempt to describe the uproar and confusion that ensued, as the public prints of the day did ample justice to the occurrences of these memorable seasons of conviviality. Suffice it to say, that there were few perfectly sober persons in the village, except Mr Swinton and his son, and

young Hilton, who could not resist the temptation of again seeing Martha under her own roof. Her beauty was considerably enhanced by dress, and poor Joseph almost forgot the unfavorable impression made on his mind, by the circumstance already related. He looked at her guileless, modest countenance, until he felt assured that she never could have been guilty of deceit. Once during the day her father alluded to the dress she had on, and asked Joseph's opinion of his taste. "I chose that for my dear girl, because she gave up the purchase of a plaid upon which she had set her fancy; an't it handsomer than any plaid?" "By the by, Martha," said Mrs Swinton, "I saw poor Lucy Adams dressed in that very plaid which she wanted you to buy in partnership with her. Do you know who joined her in the purchase? for Norvel declared he would not cut the piece for so small a person as Lucy." "No mama," said Martha, "I cannot imagine who joined with her. I did not know she had made the purchase until this morning, when I found her preparing for the party."

Martha Swinton looked so perfectly guileless and innocent when she said this, that Joseph could not retain a shadow of suspicion. He hesitated whether he should not mention what had occurred at the tavern on Saturday evening, but he determined to wait for an opportunity of mentioning it to Mrs Swinton alone. The

next morning he told her all that he had witnessed, saying at the same time that he thought it right to tell her the circumstance, least something disagreeable might arise from her ignorance of the fact. Mrs Swinton was very much distressed at this account, yet she resolved not to act precipitately, but to take time for consideration. She judged wisely, that people who make a practice of telling falsehoods, are generally provided with some stratagem to escape detection.

That evening when all the family had walked out, Mrs Swinton sent to ask Jenny Jenks to come over to see her for a moment. Jenny's heart misgave her when she received the message, but the next moment she recollected that perhaps she was sent for to visit the old negro woman at Mr Swinton's who had been sick for several days.

Mrs Swinton received her kindly, and asked her many questions concerning the family of Mr Adams, when all at once she looked full in her face and said, "By the by, Jenny, how did Lucy get the dress that she wore yesterday; tell me all about it Jenny, as a friend, and I'll forgive you, if you've done any thing amiss." Jenny was confounded.—She hesitated a little in the hope of fabricating a specious falsehood, a thing she was generally prompt enough in doing; but Mrs Swinton came out with the story so plainly, that there was no hope of escaping de-

tection. She therefore threw herself upon Mrs Swinton's mercy, and whined out some broken excuses for her conduct.

The good woman knew that Jenny's situation was one of great temptation, and that she really did as well as most persons would have done in the same circumstances. She pitied her, and gave her a great deal of good advice, without rebuking her more than was absolutely necessary. She told her that in teaching Lucy to deceive her father, she was undermining the honorable principles of the poor girl in a shameful manner. "Jenny," said she, "depend on it that falsehood will never—never serve your turn as well as truth. It is terrible to be always afraid of detection. To be forced to add deception to deception, until you are perhaps detected in wrong doing at last, as you have been in this case. How can you bear to have your conscience always loaded with evil deeds, as you must have, from the life you lead. Don't imagine that because you are a slave, you can't be an honest woman, and speak the truth, as well as the greatest lady in the land. Virtue, Jenny, is not confined to the rich or the great: believe me, it is easier to practise it in humble life, than where the situation is more exalted. In your station, it would be easy to be virtuous, if you could once make up your mind to throw aside old habits, and commence new ones."

The poor slave wept while listening to these admonitions, as if her heart had really a particle of good remaining at its bottom. Mrs Swinton promised to prevent the mischief that might have arisen from this transaction. She took the remaining part of the Plaid, and promised to answer the demand when it should be made by the pedlar, for her portion of the price.

She did this, because she foresaw that her daughter would soon be married to Joseph Hilton. He had made known his design of addressing her, to Mrs Swinton, that morning, and she felt truly thankful her beloved child would be so happily provided for. Martha received her mother's hints with blushing cheeks. She did not attempt to conceal her approbation, and that same evening Joseph had an opportunity of pleading for himself. The Plaid dress was made up, and in due time Joseph received the hand of Martha Swinton, with the warm approbation of all her friends. Their marriage was celebrated with the usual simplicity which characterised all John Swinton's family carousals. There was no whisky drunken, and no fray ensued, but every thing was conducted soberly and without confusion.

The reader perhaps thinks that the story may end here. But we wish to give a little insight into the conduct of Martha in her new capacity of mistress of a family. Joseph carried her

home to one of the prettiest cottages imaginable, so near her father's house, that even her weakly mother could sometimes hope to visit her. Martha asked and obtained leave from her husband, to invite poor Lucy Adams to spend some time with her. She felt sincere pity for that unfortunate girl, and could not be satisfied, as many people secure of their own happiness, would have been, to leave her to her fate. But Martha had that true benevolence of character which prompts unwearied exertions in behalf of one's fellow creatures. She thought Lucy a docile, affectionate girl, and believed in the possibility of redeeming her from ruin. With this view, she took her home when she went to house-keeping, and Lucy was soon so happy in her new situation, that she begged her father to let her remain with Martha a whole year.

During that time of probation, she made such rapid improvement, that Martha was fully repaid for her charitable plan of extricating a human creature from the influence of bad example. Lucy proved to be one of those people who are bad only because other people are so; and are apt to become good from the same reason.

These *cameleon* characters are frequently saved from ruin by a little exertion of benevolence. Lucy soon became sensible of the evil consequences arising from her great love of dress, and her consequent habit of running in

debt to procure this indulgence. She acknowledged to Martha that she owed several small sums, and her kind friend stimulated her to work hard until these debts were paid. "Debt is always dangerous," said Martha, true to her first adage. "I never incurred a debt but once in my life, and I never will again, if it can possibly be avoided. How much happier every body would be, if there was no such thing as *credit*, in this world. Then every body would appear according to their real ability, and there would be none of that contemptible emulation that is so common in these days. People would shew forth in their true colours, and when this obligation was binding upon all alike, then those who were obliged to appear plainly and even coarsely drest, would cease to be ashamed. As things are *now*, you really cannot judge of the real circumstances of any one. All dress alike, for they think they must be in the fashion."—"Yes," said Joseph; "that same word *fashion* is hateful to my ears. How many precious souls have been lost by following that idol. Young girls are very much mistaken if they think to get lovers by dressing fine. I can assure them that prudent men are deterred from getting married by that very circumstance.—They make it a rule to shun those showy, smart looking girls who evidently dress above their circumstances. It was your modest apparel, dear Martha, that first won my heart, for it convinced me that you were prudent as well as beautiful.

A TALE.

THE JUDICIOUS LEGACY.

ALBERT BLOOMFIELD was the son of a thrifty old gentleman, who began life with nothing, and was about to finish it with what is considered, in these days, a handsome fortune.—Old Bloomfield had never been guilty of the smallest relaxation in old-fashioned domestic discipline, in his life. He would have esteemed the slightest degree of indulgence to his son, a solecism in morals. The consequence of this strictness might have been foreseen. Albert became weary of parental subjection. He looked around, and saw all the young men of his acquaintance living on intimate and confidential terms with their parents, while he did not dare to address his father without being first spoken to. Although the old man was right in objecting to the excess of relaxation in family discipline, yet he was far from finding the result of his adherence to old customs conducive to his happiness. In this, as in most other things, a just medium between despotism and utter remissness of parental authority, will be found most salutary.

Old Bloomfield had been so long confined to his room in utter helplessness, that Albert began to have a foretaste of the sweets of liberty. He made no scruple of leaving his father to a careful nurse, and giving full sway to his long repressed animal spirits, in any mirthful indulgence his humour suggested.

One night at a ball, he chanced to see a kitten faced girl, who giggled so much to his taste, that he immediately invested himself with the full importance of a love affair. She looked so scornfully at him, however, that he was well nigh healed of his wound by the first intention; but a whisper from her mother occasioned a marvellous change in her deportment. The young lady was of Irish extraction, and her mother gave her a smart pinch on the arm as she said, "why, Judy Brady, what in natur has come over you, to make you cut your eye at Albert Bloomfield? An't his father as good as dead, and he an only child, you silly sumph?" Upon this hint, Miss Brady threw all the sentiment in her composition into the next glance she directed towards him. Nay, she was just about to give her hand to another partner, when, seeing him approach, she hesitated her assent to ask him if he was tired with dancing. No doubt the young gentleman was abundantly flattered by these gracious condescensions. He went home with his heart in a perfect flutter of boyish love, fell asleep to dream of Miss Brady,

and was waked towards midnight with the news that his father had kindly taken his departure in the very nick of time. But when Albert came to think over all the circumstances of his case, there were considerable drawbacks to his felicity. In the first place, his father's will bound him to keep a pious old aunt always in his family, and in the next, the $50,000 clear, was so bound up, that he could not spend it in a year, if he had been so disposed. But the most curious clause of the will, was to the following effect: that if Albert felt disposed to spend more than the interest of the money, or if he actually did squander his fortune, the executor of the will was to break open a certain strong box and abide by what it should disclose. This box was always to remain in the executor's hands, and was on no account to be opened, unless in the emergency before specified. Lastly, if these conditions were violated, Albert was cut off with a shilling, and the 50,000 given to a distant relation.

The first thing that the heir determined on, was to keep this strange will from the world, as much as possible, and to act as if he held his property by the customary tenure. Accordingly, equipped in a fashionable suit of mourning, young Mr Bloomfield escorted Miss Brady to the play, and talked so dexterously of enlarging his commercial concerns by way of employing his whole capital, that the experienced

young lady became impatient to enter the firm of Bloomfield & Co. as soon as possible.

There was a little time spent in choosing wedding clothes, and a little more in determining upon a place of residence; after which, the marriage was duly solemnized. Mrs Brady thought her own house the most desirable residence, and the complaisant bridegroom acquiesced in removing his furniture as soon as possible. Notwithstanding all that is said of the ineffable tranquility of the first four weeks after marriage, we confidently believe that quarrels have been known to take place even within that consecrated period. When people come together in wedlock with no better acquaintance with each other than what arises from casual meetings at places of amusement, there is little hope of their finding true happiness. We are inclined to doubt whether love, that commenced in the ball room, ever eventuated in true conjugal felicity. This opinion arises from a sort of prediction of ours in favour of laying good foundations for every earthly blessing, lest the usual slippery nature of temporal good, be aggravated, by an unsound ground work. The house which is to last for life, is carefully built, and not less care should be taken in rearing the fabric of conjugal happiness, which ought, for credit sake, to last for life. But we have known people to take more trouble in choosing a garment, than in selecting a companion in

wedlock. This proves, that if marriages are *made* in Heaven, they are frequently *marred* on earth. But we will leave the reader to judge for himself, and proceed as well as we can with the narrative before us.

Albert Bloomfield spent twice as much as his income amounted to, under the auspices of Hymen. But Mrs Brady was, as she affirmed, "a raal jidge of illegance," for her grandmother's first husband was second cousin to the steward of some great family in Ireland dear, and therefore the widow had been nurtured in gentility from her very infancy.

Habits of fashionable lounging are not long in forming, and in due time, Albert sauntered about with as easy an air of non-chalance, as if his upright person had never been imprisoned behind the counter, or his fair hands employed in measuring silks and ribbons. Alas! how much easier it is to learn evil than good! Twenty years instruction in sobriety and discretion were obliterated by one sweeping twelvemonth of idleness and extravagance. Albert was made sick every time he drank too much wine, but yet his desire to be a thorough going man of fashion, gave him fortitude to endure bodily suffering, until at length he reached the highest point of his ambition, and could swallow two bottles of Madeira, without being, as he expressed it, either sick or sorry.

All this time Mrs Bloomfield was not with-

out her plans for attaining supremacy in fashion. She dressed, and laughed, and danced and dined out, and traversed the streets indefatigably in the lady-like employment of shopping. Neither could it be said that the merchants dreaded her *entree*, as sometimes happens, for she was infinitely too well bred not to purchase some of every thing that was displayed to her. She thought it "shocking" to give so much trouble for nothing, and ruined her husband, rather than make herself unpopular with the merchants' clerks. 'Tis certainly a most contemptible pursuit for an accountable being, this business of ransacking the shops, whether you choose the alternative of giving trouble in the store, or bringing ruin on your family.

Mrs Bloomfield's children were left pretty much to their grandmother, who skilfully innoculated them with every chronic disease in the catalogue of folly and fashion. The little creatures were often seen sailing down the streets, dressed like miniature women, flirting their fans, and dangling their reticules, like the most approved veterans in such important achievements.

Every body acknowledged that their mother educated them judiciously, for she never was detected in leaving out a flounce or a furbelow in their juvenile habiliments, and they were never seen to hang their heads and look like ill-brought up children. As they grew older too,

they were sent to the most fashionable schools, and instructed in all the most approved methods of wasting time. Miss Judith, the eldest daughter, was taught music, and her singing often attracted the attention of people three squares off, and once actually summoned the city authorities to the street in which she lived, from their having mistaken her voice for that of the town crier.

Time passed off as usual, bearing away the bloom and graces of Mrs Bloomfield, who from late hours and much fretting, was a very Hecate in appearance. Her mother had been gathered to the last home of all flesh, and two of her daughters were about to make their debut in the fashionable world. A grand ball, given on some public festival, was appointed for this important introduction, and for two weeks previous, the brains of both mother and daughters were filled with flowers, feathers and frippery, to the exclusion of every idea that bore the most remote affinity to common sense or reason.

About ten o'clock, the night before this party was expected to take place, Mrs Bloomfield entered the room in which her husband usually sat, in the expectation of succeeding either by persuasion, or other well known means, in making him add to a sum long destined to purchase a trinket for the eldest belle. Albert was not to be found in this, his usual *panting*

place, as his affectionate wife denominated the room in which he took shelter from her persecutions. There was nothing alarming in this, and the lady quietly waited an hour for her absent husband;—still he came not. "Ay," thought she, "the niggardly fellow knows full well that I want him to loosen his purse strings, and that is the reason he stays away. But he can't escape me; I'll have him yet, in time to get the money I want. Judith shall not go into company in an ordinary style, if I can prevent it. 'Tis hard indeed that a mother can't have her way in such trifles as regard the management of her daughters. I'm sure, he has always had his own foolish, mean way with the boys. He has put them to business, by the advice of that stupid Mr Holdfast, his father's executor, and now he won't even reward me for my compliance, by letting me do as I please with the girls."

Mrs Bloomfield forgot, in this report of her conjugal deference, that she had often declared to her husband, that "she did not care a fig for the boys; that he might make galley slaves of them, for aught she cared." And indeed the poor fellows had been altogether slighted by the fashionable mother, who seemed to forget that they were equally her own offspring with the girls on whom she lavished her injudicious affections. Albert had been induced, by the prudent advice of his father's friend, to put his

sons out to business, and they were consequently steady children, who had escaped the storm of folly under which the rest of the family were sinking.

Mr Holdfast was a true friend to the dissipated young man. He no sooner found how things were going on in the family, than he hastened to exert the influence, which long acquaintance and steady friendship had given him over the son of his old friend. He represented to Albert that he was spending his fortune rapidly, while the rapid increase of his family imperiously demanded that he should practise, at least, *decent* economy in his expenditures.

Albert at first listened with an absent air, and presently forgot all that had been said on the subject. But Mr Holdfast was one of those firm, constant characters, who cannot be deterred from performing a serious duty, by any obstacles that can possibly be overcome. Some people satisfy conscience by making a few vague efforts to deter their friends from ruinous practises, and then take great praise to themselves, for their exertions. They do not hesitate to say when the worst has happened, "Ah! I foresaw it all, and used all my influence to prevent the consequences of such folly, but in vain; the poor fellow would not heed me," &c. This jargon is very common among people who can't help secretly congratulating themselves

on being so much better than their erring friends.

But Mr Holdfast took prudent means to arrest the prodigality of young Bloomfield, and although he could not succeed until all the property was nearly exhausted, he at least rescued the boys from the contagion to which they were exposed, and put them both in very respectable situations, where they might realize independent fortunes by their own exertions.—Albert derived but little benefit from his friend's expostulations at the time they were uttered, for he was then in the vortex of folly, where neither sounds nor sights of prudence could reach him; but as he gradually withdrew from his wild companions, and began to look seriously at the state of his pecuniary affairs, all the wise admonitions of his friend returned upon his memory, as if they had been just then uttered. He began to inspect his accounts, and daily discoveries burst upon him, which soon disclosed the full extent of his pecuniary embarrassments. He had never talked reasonably to his wife, for he found out early in his inauspicious union, that the lady could not comprehend a rational argument. Besides, such was the vehemence of her temper, and the obstinacy of her self-will, that opposition would have been vain, had he been able to rouse himself to attempt it. A silly woman is always hard enough to manage, but when bad temper

and selfishness combine with extravagance to turn a weak brain, the north wind is not harder to restrain than such a character.

We mentioned in the commencement of our tale, that Albert Bloomfield found himself restricted by the terms of his father's will, to the bare use of the income of the estate; but he soon devised ways and means to render that prudent clause utterly nugatory. We cannot take time to explain this ingenious procedure, for we have kept the reader already too long from an interesting point of our narrative.

We left Mrs Bloomfield waiting patiently for her husband's return home, that she might display her conjugal dexterity in extracting money from him, against his better judgment. She had posted herself in his dressing room, where she lounged very comfortably an hour in his easy chair, engrossed in reverie, and martialing her forces, like an experienced general, that she might commence her attack according to the most approved method of conjugal warfare. But twelve, and one, and even two o'clock came, without bringing the enemy in sight of her well arranged ambush. The lady unwillingly retreated to bed, and pondered over her favorite scheme, until her eyes closed in mere bodily exhaustion. Even in her dreams, did this experienced tactician carry on her train of military operations, and suffer fancy to crown her with the laurels of conquest.

Day time and breakfast time arrived in due succession, and still the father of the family had not returned to his subordinate post of duty in Mrs Bloomfield's establishment. It must be allowed that the lady missed him almost as much as if he had occupied the highest department in her household—so useful and convenient are these tamed husbands to their busy, managing partners.

The whole day past without any tidings of Mr Bloomfield, and his wife and daughters were in too much consternation to enjoy themselves at the ball, to which, however, they did not fail to go, as it would have been sinful to waste so many tasteful preparations. The wife could not keep her eye from the door during the evening. Every new comer made her heart throb, until she had investigated the lineaments, and discovered that he was not the person she sought. Late at night, she retired in real perturbation, but still with a strong hope of seeing her husband on her return home. This hope proved abortive. She descended hastily from her carriage, and questioned the servants with a trembling voice. She hastened to his dressing room. There stood the arm-chair just as she had vacated it the night before. Reluctantly the wondering family retired to unquiet slumbers, from which they awoke to still increasing wonder and accumulated fears. Mr Holdfast was consulted, who acknowledged that Albert had vi-

sited him early on the day before the party, and had left his house in visible perturbation.

By this time the whole city was in confusion. Various conjectures of murder and kidnapping and other congenial horrors, assailed the imaginations of that voluminous corps of gossippers, which infest all large cities. The family of Mr Bloomfield were in real distress. The children missed a father whom they could not help loving, though little had been done to cultivate their filial feelings. The wife could not but experience "an aching void," when she found herself deprived of an obedient vassal, and a constant theme for the exercise of various faculties, which were likely to stagnate from disuse. Besides, a husband, though he may be a zero, yet as he stands to the right hand of the efficient numerical figure, cannot but impart consequence by increasing its value.

A week passed in this state of painful suspense, during which time, public curiosity had received ample satisfaction from a most ingenious conjecture, set afloat by some one who was fully acquainted with the domestic martyrdom endured by Mr Bloomfield.

"Poor man! who could endure such tyranny! such incessant thraldom;—peace had long been a stranger to his bosom. He had become haggard and melancholy. There was a visible wildness in his eye, a strange something in his manner betokening internal disquiet." In short,

such things had happened before, and who could say that they might not happen again. There was little doubt in the opinions of the sages of the social circle, that poor Mr Bloomfield's body would cast up yet, in some river or mill-pond, or may be, at the foot of some precipice, or in some dark forest."

Such was the final conclusion of the gossips who had seldom had so wide a field for the display of their ingenuity, or the exercise of their peculiar characteristics. It is a treat to this class of beings, to have a free opportunity of pouring forth the long repressed torrent of malevolent censure. If a character is set up for them to shoot at, they are in ecstasy; and poor Mrs B. was abandoned without defence to their tender mercies. These people depend so entirely upon the failings of mankind for both occupation and amusement, that nothing can be more delightful, than to have a mine opened to their critical researches, in some cast-off being, who is given up by virtuous people. They proceed with professional avidity to the dissection of a slaughtered reputation, as surgeons do to an analogous process upon the body of a common malefactor. In each case they are relieved from the restraint occasioned by procuring subjects surreptitiously. The gossip has to manœuvre as much as the surgeon to procure anatomical subjects without detection. But when once society has pronounced sentence upon an

unfortunate individual, they flock around him like vultures about a diseased and dying animal.

The situation of Albert Bloomfield's family, was indeed deplorable. No sooner was the fact of his having absconded, or being otherwise missing, known to the world than innumerable creditors flocked to the property in possession of his wife and children. Mr Holdfast exerted himself with true friendliness, but even his interference could save not more than a stinted pittance for the deserted children, and their misguided mother. Mrs Bloomfield did not attempt to suppress herself under this sudden and unexpected reverse of fortune. We cannot say that she was heart broken, for it had always been doubtful whether she possessed such a commodity as a heart. But her proud and haughty spirit was completely subdued, and her character possessed no stamina to give a new impulse to her deranged and disabled powers. She broke, at first, into a storm of passion, and bewailed her hard fate; so unconscious was she that she had already drank more abundantly of the cup of prosperity than her utmost merits could have entitled her to.

This is a common case in our world. People who have been spoilt by selfish indulgence, become habituated to a wrong sense of their own deservings; and repine at the commonest viscissitudes of life. They think their former prosperity was but a just tribute to their merits, and

murmur under every adverse dispensation, as if they alone had a title to be exempt from human misery: when perhaps their real characters may be far removed from even what the world denominates merit. But self-complacency supplies the place of virtue, to those who abound in the one and are destitute of the other.

Mrs Bloomfield literally snarled and scolded out the rest of her existence. Her eldest son, who was a fine, steady, considerate youth, conjured his mother to depend upon him for the maintenance of her family, as he would soon be able to establish himself in lucrative business; but she angrily replied that she "did not want to *live*, unless she could be in the gay world, on her former footing of affluence and gentility." She lingered as long as she could in her fine house, and went to the asylum prepared for her by the benevolence of Mr Holdfast, with a feeling of utter despair, and imbecile repining. She seemed to forget that any thanks were due to her benefactor; but fortunately, he was one of those rare characters who do all possible good, without expecting to be rewarded in this world. Her daughters looked like frightened sheep, as they skulked about, with an indefinite feeling of humiliation. They had been taught to consider wealth as the only rational distinction between man and man; having scorned to associate with those beneath them in that essential particular, they now rightly cal-

culated on being cast off by their wealthy associates. Of all the flatterers who swarmed about the rich Bloomfields, partaking unscrupulously of their lavish bounty, not a solitary individual felt an emotion of pity for their downfal. The self-indulgent, and luxurious have no sense of sympathy or affection. They flutter around those who can minister to their corrupt tastes, with a sort of technical civility of demeanor, which means nothing in reality. If they have any feeling towards them, it is either envy at their prosperity or contempt for the understanding that can be so easily duped. Instead of assisting to uphold them when threatened with a downfal, they are perhaps the first to trample on them, when their overthrow is complete; and to exult in their humiliation. Such is worldly friendship; and he that never attempts to bind, for it assuredly could not hold, a single virtuous feeling in its thraldom.

Mrs Bloomfield only survived the ruin of her family ten months. During that brief period, she suffered herself, and made her daughters suffer, years of self-inflicted agony. To the last moment of her miserable existence, she persisted in reviling her absent husband in the harsh terms she had been accustomed to use to him in person. It seemed as if this indulgence was necessary to her existence. It was the rushing off of the accumulated waters of wrath, which, like the element itself, will submit to no

barrier in its chafed and roaring madness. She died at length, and peace once more spread her downy pinions over the family circle. Mr Holdfast took the poor girls to his own home. He found them completely humbled and subdued by the severe discipline they had experienced. All ideas of luxury and self-indulgence had passed away from their youthful minds, and their excellent protector lost no time in scattering good seed upon the soil of their harrassed and perturbed hearts. The boys were already trained to rational views of their situation, and the girls soon fell into virtuous habits, and found their happiness so much increased, that they regretted nothing of their former condition, save the society of their father. Albert had soon tired of dissipated life. There are some minds in which the streams of youthful folly is soon exhausted. Others continue to flow through life as if from a perrennial source, delugeing all the sober faculties inherent in the character.

Albert Bloomfield possessed a mind of the sort we have first described. After associating with fine gentlemen, until he had completely mastered his early repugnance to dissipation, his mind took a sudden disgust for such pursuits. He hung on a little longer from the influence of habit, but even this forced compliance with pernicious customs had its salutary effect. His eyes were opened, and he saw through all the shallow disguises of these ostensible vota-

ries of pleasure. He penetrated to the depths of their wearied spirits, and saw vexation of spirit, and remorse of conscience, under every forced ebullition of mirth.

We have seen an ingenious fiction of a man who was carried, for a season, to Fairy Land. At first he was dazzled with the splendour of every thing about. Splendid feasts, sumptuous entertainments, and mirth without restriction, occupied the time of these airy beings. At length, one of the fairies anointed his eye with the juice of a certain herb, and he found his sense of vision wonderfully altered. The next time he attended a feast, the table was covered with human bones, and putrifying flesh: In short, the most disgusting and alarming objects appeared before his sight, and he became aware, that in joining the carousals of these people, he had satisfied his appetite with loathsome and corrupted objects, while the illusion under which he laboured, made him imagine he was feeding on the most refined luxuries. This discovery so shocked the deluded mortal, that he hastened to regain his liberty, and returned to the plain and wholesome realities of life.

Mr Bloomfield was somewhat in the situation of this poor man. He no longer felt himself enthralled by the pleasures of sense. The forced merriment of his jaded, and sated companions, did not impose upon him. He looked with a rational and philosophic eye, on the

scenes which he had condemned himself to witness, and saw premature and unhonored wrinkles and gray hairs, unaccompanied by solid enjoyments or any preparation even for old age, while death seemed never for an instant to intrude on their weakened and perverted minds.

It happened one day, while Albert was sitting at table with these creatures of sense, that one of the wealthiest and wittiest of the party, fell down in an apoplectic fit. He was sitting next to Mr Bloomfield, and had just uttered a witticism, little dreaming that it was the dying effort of his drowned intellects. His face was purpled with habitual intemperance, and distorted with a ghastly smile, when he suddenly gasped for breath. The wine he was attempting to swallow gurgled in his throat. The jest he was endeavoring to laugh at, expired in the utterance, and he fell back in a frightful convulsion. After a few earthquake spasms of the heart, accompanied by appalling gestures, his soul burst from its prison house, and hasted to its last account.

The terrified company fled through the nearest avenues and left the dying sinner alone. Habitual self-indulgence had not prepared them to render assistance to any description of human misery, and their nervous systems were far too tremulous, to permit a steady review of such a scene. This wretched man was the founder of the convivial institution, in presiding at which

he drew his last breath. He had been as much extolled for his exertions to combine his fellow beings in the practice of vice, as if he had founded a hospital, or built an infirmary. Albert went home to sleep off his two bottles of wine, and to dream over the tragedy he had just witnessed. For several successive weeks he could not attend the meeting of the club. At length he was fined as a delinquent, and summoned to account for his apostacy. He appeared before the august tribunal, and found himself in the midst of his usual associates, among whom he discerned no sign of approaching seriousness. He looked at their bloated persons with compassion, and observed that each man wore a crape in token of respect for their departed companion. This was in fact the only shadow of change that appeared among them.

"Gentlemen," said Albert firmly, "I must be plain with you. The death of our companion in debauchery has alarmed me. I am free to confess that I dread a similar doom, and it really appears to be the only one likely to befall any of us. My eyes are opened; and I can no longer continue a member of this club. You are welcome to erase my name, and inflict on me any punishment you think proper. There is the amount of my fine. I feel no regret whatever at paying it, but from the idea that it will only stimulate you to further excesses."

A low groan followed this enunciation, which broke out finally into an unanimous hiss. "Hear him!" said the president, "he speaks treason against the laws of good fellowship, and social feeling. Oh the craven! the recreant." This speech was attended with wild gestures and clapping of hands throughout the assembly. "Oh," says one gentlemen, (a would be *wit*) "do not blame the gentleman so much, he is married, as we all know to an angelic tempered woman, who makes his home so happy that he cannot leave it for our dull company." This sarcasm made Albert's face glow manifestly, but still he was resolute. "Farewell gentlemen," said he, "I thank you for past kindness and friendship. I hope my withdrawing from the society, will not disturb our individual feelings. We may surely be friends to each other in the world, as well as over the bottle." No answer was made to this, and Mr Bloomfield gladly escaped from the trying scene. He heard one of the company exclaim, "ay! let him go. I know one who will fully avenge our cause. If he can stand the scourge of his wife's tongue and temper, his heart has a tougher case than mine, I know. But let him go, and send a loud hurra after him." The noise which followed was like the yelling of demons, and Albert quickened his pace, to get out of hearing. Before he was aware whither his retreating steps conducted him, he found himself at the

door of his own house. The voice of his wife saluted his ears, so as to form a continuation of the shout raised by his deserted companions. Alas! thought he! where on earth can I find peace. Not at home, where a domestic tyrant destroys my every comfort. Not abroad, for I have no real friends—no rational associates.

But just at this crisis, Albert recollected Mr Holdfast, his father's friend, and the executor of his will. He turned his steps immediately towards this gentleman's house, and soon received a warm reception from the benevolent old man.

Albert told him of the step he had just taken, and was highly gratified to perceive that the information was greeted with a cordial smile of pleasure. "From my soul, I rejoice at this instance of your resolute opposition to vice," said he. "And now I will tell you Mr Bloomfield, that when I saw you, immediately on becoming your own master, take a wife from the bosom of dissipation and unite yourself with that drunken club, I thought all was over with you, and gave you up for lost. But now I have strong hopes of you. They say a "bad beginning makes a good ending." I trust you will verify this proverb. And now, that you have redeemed my good opinion, allow me to give you a little advice. I know it is a delicate matter, but a friend is worthless in my mind, who will not risk something to save the person he

professes to love, from ruin. You have a fine family of children: no man has finer; return to your parental duties; educate these children prudently, and besides that,—hang it all,—I don't know what to say on such a subject—and yet I must say something," said he, puffing out the words as if they burnt his mouth. "Go home, and manage your wife, man; don't submit any longer to petticoat government. It will spoil the finest fellow that ever lived. Make a reasonable woman of Mrs Bloomfield, and you will be a happy man after all that's come and gone yet." Albert sighed deeply at these words, for he knew well the impediments to the reformation, anticipated by his friend. He said nothing however, and his good friend answered him, as if he had spoken, "you think that impossible! hey! well, I don't wonder you should feel discouraged. But at any rate don't lose heart about it, if you do, you lose all! Try your best; there's nothing like trying, and if you can't succeed, why, then, make the best of your condition. Matters are seldom so bad, that they cannot be made bearable by patience and prudence. Come along, I will go home with you, and tell your wife what a virtuous action you have just performed, sure if the woman has a heart in her bosom, she must love and respect you for what you have done.

But Mr Holdfast was convinced by this very experiment, that Mrs Bloomfield had no share,

whatever in the virtuous feelings of her sex. She heard the story of her husband's magnanimous desertion of his dissipated companions, without any sort of emotion. Indeed after a little while, she seemed rather to regret the circumstance, for she looked sour and said. "I suppose then, I shall have him upon my hands more than ever. I used always to rejoice when he went to the club, because he was out of my way for a whole day at least, and I could have my own way in every thing, without having to contend for it. Mr Holdfast listened to this speech with a silent shrug of his shoulders. He cast a glance of compassion on Albert and took leave without useless words. This good old gentleman had an only daughter, a prudent, sensible, amiable woman, and his old friend Mr Bloomfield and himself had cherished the idea, that these two children of their love, would be united in marriage. Indeed, Albert had encouraged the plan, by paying particular attention to Miss Holdfast, as long as his father lived. The adventure of the ball however, being followed so immediately by his release from parental thraldom, had completely driven this really meritorious woman from his head, to make room for one so lamentably his inferior. Mr. Holdfast was inclined to resent Albert's palpable trifling with his daughter's feelings, but that prudent young lady, wisely smothered her dawning predeliction, and assumed a suita-

ble air of indifference on the occasion. She even went so far as to ask her father's permission to take Albert's old aunt as a companion, for she plainly saw that the character of Mrs Brady and her daughter, could never be otherwise than repugnant to a pious, serious woman. The good old gentleman agreed, and when he saw how things were likely to turn out, he rejoiced that his daughter had escaped what seemed so unpropitious a union.

But Albert's subsequent conduct had awakened better hopes in his bosom, and the old gentleman could not help bitterly regretting, as he plodded homewards after the interview we have just related, that the son of his old friend had not been united with his daughter.

From the time of Mrs Bloomfield's death Miss Lucy Holdfast, who would never consent to form a matrimonial connexion, became a real parent to the desolate children. She was the undisputed mistress of her father's house and after contributing to the comfort of Albert's aunt, as long as she lived, her attention was next turned towards his children. The reader is now requested to recollect a clause in the will of old Bloomfield, mentioned in the beginning of our tale, to wit, "that if his son should squander the money left him, the executor was to break open a box left in his keeping, and abide by what it should disclose." Mr Holdfast had compelled Albert to bind himself by oath,

that he would not swerve from his father's directions, before he allowed him to enter on the possession of his estate. The crisis at which the mysterious box was to be broken open, at length arrived. The very day before the memorable party, (the day that Albert was missing) the disconsolate husband and father, had applied to his only real friend for a solution of this mystery. "Remember," said Mr Holdfast, taking hold of the casket, "that you are bound on oath to abide by the directions contained in this box. But you are a man of honor, and I am not afraid of your swerving from the very letter of your obligations." The box was opened and nothing appeared but a paper containing these words: "Son Albert, If you spend the $50,000, left in cash, (as I know you will,) you will be reduced to want. This is precisely what I wish. It is the only thing that can save you from moral ruin. Therefore, at such a crisis, you are enjoined on oath to abide by what this box shall disclose. I command you, by virtue of your oath, to absent yourself two years from your luxurious abode, and spend that time in laboring for a maintenance: take not a shilling with you, but labor for bread. If at the end of that period of probation, you examine the lower compartment of this box, (which must not be opened until then) you will receive an additional proof of your father's affection."

Such was the secret revealed, by unclosing the mysterious casket: Mr Holdfast was privy to the whole affair, and lest he should have died and carried the secret with him, it was revealed to four other responsible citizens. In case Albert should not spend his fortune, the executor was directed, after twenty years, to give up the box to him without condition.

Mr Holdfast advised his friend to abscond as privately as possible, which he accordingly did. He went to a considerable distance from home, changed his name, and labored as a common hand, for common wages. At the end of two years he returned, greatly improved in health and spirits. He found every thing at home, that was really essential to his happiness, and his greatest scourge removed by Providence. On breaking open the lower part of the box, it was found to contain bank notes to the amount of $50,000, being half the fortune of his father. In due time he married Miss Holdfast, and was richly indemnified for all his past sufferings.

"THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE."

A TALE.

In a small hut, or rather a hovel, at the foot of the Blue-Ridge, lived a family by the name of Reynolds. They were in the most low and humble state of poverty, having only the means of subsistence in return for the most arduous labor. But seldom are the rich, in their most exalted state of affluence, blessed with such pure and heart-felt content as was enjoyed by every member of this humble family.

Andrew Reynolds, the father, had been brought up by charity, and had experienced so many hardships in his childhood, that he was content in manhood with his own earnings, and an habitation of the humblest description. Maggy, his wife, and Hetty, his grown daughter, kept every thing snug and comfortable in the dirt-floored cabin. You could scarcely imagine, on entering this dwelling, that three grown persons and four children, could have been packed away within its walls.

The whole house was only eighteen feet square, and a part of that space was cut off by

a coarse plank partition for a separate chamber for Hetty and her two sisters. A strong timber bedstead, fresh hewed from the woods, occupied one corner of the outward apartment. This piece of furniture was built up so high, that a small low bed was commodiously situated beneath it. This was occupied by the boys, without changing its position, as they had space enough to turn and breathe in. The floor was trodden so hard, that it was as firm as a plank floor, and it was always swept clean from every species of litter. A huge, misshapen press, made of unplaned plank, filled up a considerable part of the room. This opened in two parts, one of which seemed as a pantry, the other as a place to stow away the family wardrobe. But it was impossible to imagine more order than was discovered in the arrangement of this press, in both its compartments. The little children never even peeped into its shelves, for they had been taught to respect the single wooden bolt, as much as they would have done a patent steel lock.

But perhaps the reader will be best pleased with spending an entire day in company with the worthy people we have attempted to describe. He must then transport himself to their cottage a little before day, when this industrious family are dressing themselves by torchlight. As soon as it is light enough to read, he will see them all gathering about Andrew Reynolds, who has

just reverentially unclosed the sacred volume of inspiration. This is not an idle ceremony, a mere mockery of devotion, performed with cold hearts and wandering minds. No! from infancy, each one of that humble group has been taught to adore the Supreme Being, and look up to Him through life as an ever present guardian. They now feel the solemnity of a present God! Their hearts bow, as if He stood revealed in his majesty before them. Even the babe of two years old has been taught to keep perfectly still before the altar, round which the inmates of the cottage have assembled themselves in solemn prayer. Andrew speaks in the spirit, for his faith is ever in vigorous exercise. "My children," he says, "God is present every where. We have only to address him, and he hears us; we have only to ask what we want, and we receive it at his hands, if it is really proper for us; but if he withholds any thing from our supplications, it is because his wisdom knows that we should not be made happy by its possession. Therefore let us be content to resign what he withholds. Let us adore the mercy that has given us so full a measure of happiness in this world, and the prospect of better things in the world to come. We have enough; let us be thankful, and let us also be thankful that we have not too much. We see daily how much worse the last state is than the first. For when yet did mediocrity of circumstances pre-

vent rational enjoyment, and when did luxury prove otherwise than a snare to its possessor? So then, my children, let us thank the Lord that we have exactly enough to supply our real wants, and no wicked superfluity to create false desires."

After this short exhortation, and a suitable prayer, the family prepared for actual labour. None seemed to be pleased that the exercises were over, for each had been deeply edified: but they proceeded to commence their daily toil, setting their seats away slowly, and with silent gravity, that shewed their heads were still turned to the word just sounded in their ears.

Maggy and her daughter Hetty would then set about preparing their frugal family meal. The mother would make up the Indian corn hoe-cake, while the daughter would take her clean pail on her head, and go forth to milk the cow. The boys always followed their father to whatever out door labor he was engaged in, on the farm. The two little girls seated themselves on their oaken stools, to learn their lessons; for they had the advantage of all necessary instruction from their mother and sister, the former of whom had been brought up with unusual care, until her 12th year, in a great family. Andrew Reynolds had attended a Sabbath School in his youth, from which he was wont to say he had derived more good than he could

have done from a University. "For I learnt there," said he, "that I have a soul to be saved—a piece of information, which, I fear, some of our youths of greatest genius have yet to acquire." He was therefore particularly glad to have an opportunity of sending all his children to a Sabbath School established near his cottage.

After preparing breakfast, the little girls would run out to call their father and brothers, who were never very far off, as the farm was not large. In a short time all would assemble round their clean deal table, on which their bright tin cans, and coarse plates, were neatly arranged. There was a little dish of bacon and eggs for the hard workers, and good bread and mush and milk for the rest. Coffee and tea were rare luxuries, though they always kept a small quantity of both in the house in case of sickness. After asking a blessing with heartfelt reverence, Andrew would seat himself with his family all around him, and it may be questioned whether there ever existed a happier being than himself, or happier people of any description, than were gathered round that table.

When breakfast was over, the mother and daughter proceeded to wash up and put away the breakfast things; after which, they hastened to the wheel or loom, whichever happened to be in use, while the little ones were set to work either to pick cotton, or to learn to spin or sew.

Sometimes they were employed in weeding the garden, and no one ever heard a word of contention between these little girls. Instead of quarrelling, as some children do, about who should go to work, and who should remain idle, they dreaded idleness more than any thing in the world. Their mother had told them when they were very young, that an idle person was a cushion for the devil to roll himself upon, and this frightened them very much. When these little things went to the spring for water, or weeded the garden, they always talked about profitable things. They repeated over their Sabbath School questions, and tried to perfect themselves in whatever they were learning. Unless children do this, it is almost impossible to teach them any thing. No one can be taught against his will, and many children treat their teachers as if they were tyrants, who voluntarily worried themselves with instructing refractory pupils. Now this is almost as bad a fault as young people can commit, for it certainly aggravates the difficulty of instruction so much, as to make it often insurmountable. There are many dunces in the world who had just the same opportunity of learning, that the wisest have had; but they *would* not learn, and therefore grew up in ignorance.

There was little danger of such an evil befalling any of the Reynolds family, for learning to read was one of their greatest recreations.

The hour of dinner generally past without Andrew's return to the house, for he did not choose that his children should fast as long as he had accustomed himself to do; therefore his wife always sat down to dinner with them about one or two o'clock, while she took care to set aside the nicest morsels of their frugal fare for her husband. Just two hours by sun Andrew would return to *his* dinner, and while he was eating, the children would read to him. This was a delightful treat to all parties, and after it was over, the good man would go out to work in the garden, or to do what he called *home* work, for he never returned to the farm after dinner.

At night the good man would work at the shoe-maker's or carpenter's trade, until bed time. The day always closed as it began, with prayer, and Andrew would lead the conversation dexterously to holy subjects some time before he commenced his devotional exercises; for he used to say it was unseemly to commence prayer with one's mind full of trifling images.

Never was there more uniform and cordial contentment than prevailed beneath that humble roof, and never did the dove of peace fold her downy wings over a more guileless household. The Sabbath day was hailed with peculiar feelings by these genuine Christians. Their attendance on church was constant, and the minister used to say that he did not remember

having ever missed one of Andrew Reynolds's family from their accustomed seat in the sanctuary.

Near the little farm of Mr Reynolds, was situated one of those modern structures, which are now daily rising in our prosperous country. It was the residence of Mr Marmaduke Highheart, a person of great wealth and consequence in the State of Virginia. This gentleman's income was immense, and he employed it lavishly in every selfish and sensual gratification. Though born and bred in a republican country, he evidently looked down upon the meanly dressed poor, as upon the reptiles that he trod beneath his feet.

One day Maggy Reynolds sent her daughter Hetty to carry some fine fowls to Mrs Highheart; that lady having sent her servants to all the poor people around her, to inquire if they had any such articles to dispose of. Hetty had also a large basket of eggs to sell, and she begged her mother to let Susan go with her, to help carry her marketable commodities. Accordingly little Sue was equipped in a clean homespun frock and apron, with a straw bonnet of her sister's plaiting, and a little short brown cloak, also of domestic manufacture. Hetty had on her usual work day apparel, for she kept herself so clean, that no one could have guessed she had already worn her gown three days. Indeed, all the children of Andrew

Reynolds were tutored well in every thing, and their mother had taught them that dirtying their clothes unnecessarily, gave a great deal of trouble to Hetty and herself, who were the only washer-women of the family.

Hetty and little Sue went on to the "great house," as Mr Highheart's residence was called. When they arrived at the door, they were met by a colored servant, who eyed them insolently, and inquired angrily what they wanted. "I don't love to see poor folks here," said he, "they comes to beg for old clothes, and to take away sich things from poor servants." "But I don't come to beg," said Hetty, with dignity. "I come to sell my mother's fowls to Mrs Highheart, who sent word she wanted them." "Oh my stars!" said the negro, "how proud we are, with our copperas colored *ginney cloth*. I wonder what people will come to in this world. But come along! go into dat dare room. Missis is dare, tell what lies you please, and git what you can. All's one to Simon."

The poor girls acceded to this ungracious direction, and went into the adjoining room softly. Little Sue was somewhat fearful that the Brussels carpet might not be intended to walk upon, but her sister assured her in a whisper that every body trod on them without compunction, though the flowers did look almost as if you could smell to them.

The door of Mrs Highheart's dressing room

opened, and the timid children stood at the entrance waiting for some signal of encouragement to advance, and make known their business. The mistress of the mansion was standing before a large mirror trying on a new cap, and two little girls sat on velvet covered stools before the fire; one of them held a waxen doll so unusually large, that little Sue very naturally took it for a child of flesh and blood. "Mamma," said the little girl with the doll, "Amanda wants a baby like mine; don't give it to her, if you please. What business has she with such a costly doll?" "Indeed," said the lady, without turning round, "why the chit forgets that she is a poor orphan, who would not have had a home, if we had not given her one." "No, indeed," said the amiable young lady, "and every mouthful she eats belongs to us, and when papa and you die, and I have all the fortune, I can turn her out of doors, if I please, and I dare say I will, for she is mighty proud and troublesome."

"Come, Anastasia my love," returned her judicious mother, "don't talk so unpleasantly about dying. I assure you neither your father nor I have any notion of dying for a long time yet; and as for Amanda, why, she is your cousin, and your papa says she has got some fortune, though not enough to afford to bring her up in the same style with *our* child."

All this time the little Amanda sat swelling

with pride and anger; at length she broke out, "I don't care about any of you," said she, "I have a fortune; I know papa always said his darling should be rich, and I dare say the money that uncle paid for that doll came out of my papa's pocket. Uncle has got it all, and he can cheat me if he pleases, but I hope Satan will run away with him if he does." To this speech the lady of the house was about to reply tartly, but just as she had gotten over the words, "you little vixen," she discovered that the cap she was about to try on, was entirely too small. She had drawn up her hair in the smallest possible compass before she put on the cap, but the moment she ascertained the fact, she stamped violently with her feet, rung the bell until the cord broke, and absolutely yelled with rage. A servant entered to the bell. "There," said her mistress, "take this good for nothing cap, and never let me see it again: go to Jane Foster, and tell her for me, to quit my house instantly, for she is a vile deceiver! she told me when I hired her as a governess to the girls, that she was bred a milliner, and I had no earthly doubt but that she could make all my caps and bonnets for me; but I never will see her again, and she shall not stay another night under my roof. A wretch! to think of imposing upon me in this infamous manner. To destroy my good lace and muslin, besides disappointing me of my promised pleasure. This

cap was made in a fashion that none of the neighbors had yet seen, and I was to show off in it to morrow before them all. But tell that creature to be gone instantly. I will at least, be revenged on her in that way, if in no other."

"But madam," interposed the maid, "Miss Jane Foster is lame, and can't get to any house to save her life before dark." "Never mind I say, what's that to me! a night spent in the woods would be but a small part of her deservings. Vanish I say, and do my bidding, or you shall go with her never to return." While the mistress was speaking, the two little girls startled up to listen and admire the unrepressed vehemence of rage.

In fixing her eyes intently on her mother, Miss Anastasia forgot the doll, and let it carelessly slide from her arms to the floor. "Oh don't let the pretty child fall," said little Susan, springing forward and catching the waxen doll, which she firmly believed to be a living baby. She was rewarded for her interference by a furious slap, which sent her staggering back to her sister, "how dare you touch my play thing," growled the offended young lady," do it again, if you dare now."

Hetty came forward to apologise for her terrified sister. "Indeed mam," said she with dignity, "my little sister took the doll for a human creature, or she would not have touched it. She thought it would be hurt by the fall, and

tried to save it, that's all. She never saw a waxen baby in her life, and that is so large and natural, that I don't wonder she mistook it for a real child. This explanation threw the little girls into convulsions of laughter, in the intervals of which, they exclaimed, "Oh the fool, not to know a wax doll from a human creature. Oh how very foolish!" "Hush children," said Mrs Highheart, not dreaming of rebuking their impertinence, "you laugh so obstreperously that I cannot hear what these poor girls want." "Pray," continued she, addressing Hetty, "could not you have sent in a message to me. I don't allow vulgar, low lived people to come into my dressing room. I dare say you have muddied and dirtied the carpet all over." "No madam," said Hetty, "we took particular care to wipe our feet at the door, and I assure you, we have brought no mud into your house." "Well child, if you have not brought dirt, you have worn out the carpet, I dare say by clumping on it with your coarse heavy shoes."

"I will do so no more," said Hetty, internally repenting that she had intruded upon the great lady, and promising herself never to do so again. "But your servant directed me to this room, or I should not have come in, mam." "Oh I dont doubt, it was that Zany Simon who lives by blunders. Well, but now the mischief is done, tell me what brought you here at all. You were not invited here, I suppose." "In some sort, I

may say I was invited," said Hetty, "for I was desired to bring chickens and eggs to this house, as the family wanted them." "Oh la!" said the lady, "this is a mistake with a vengeance, a pretty time I should have of it, chaffering with all the vulgarians of the neighborhood, for eggs and poultry. Carry your basket, child, to the housekeeper, and she will examine your articles and deal with you. Its no business of mine, I assure you." While Hetty was undergoing this examination, the two unfeeling, ill bred children of quality were peering rudely into little Susan's face, and laughing vehemently at her home made bonnet. They seemed to have forgotten their previous ill humor, and unfriendly feelings, in curiosity at the novelty of the little rustic's appearance. "What is it Anas," said Amanda, abbreviating the fine appellation of her cousin, and pointing to Susan's bonnet. "It's part of a bee hive, I'm thinking." "Oh no Manda, its a broken basket, don't you see plainly how it was shaped at first? Part of it, all round here, has been cut off," said she, impertinently fingering the poor child's head gear; "look! did you ever see any thing so frightful! so ridiculous. Well, I did'nt think there was any body in the country, too poor to buy a bonnet, and obliged to wear a piece of broken basket or bee hive on their head."

"Does your father drink hard, child, that he can't afford to make you decent? I'll be bound

that's the true reason of your being so meanly dressed. Papa says all the poor people in the country are drunkards." While Miss Anastasia indulged herself in this ribaldry, her cousin opened a bandbox, and took out her fashionable bonnet, holding it contemptuously near Susan's, "look cousin, an't it droll to see them together, an't this a pretty thing child? did you ever see any thing like it in your born days."

Susan bore their insults pretty well, until the imputation upon her father's sobriety completely overset her composure. She was swelling with suppressed feeling, when the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a servant with a silver waiter, loaded with cake and wine. He deposited it on the stand before his mistress, and left the room. Hetty would have followed him, but Mrs Highheart told her to remain, as she was there, and look around her, that she might have it to say, she had been in a genteel house for once in her life. "It will be a feather in your cap, girl, and will give you cause for boasting among your poor companions." While she spoke thus, she continued munching and sipping. The little girls too were devouring their cake and greedily swallowing the wine that was poured out for each of them. Amanda again pointed to Susan's bonnet, and said "look aunt, what a frightful thing? The poor child's father drinks hard, is the reason he cant buy her better clothes." "But he don't drink,"

said Susan, no longer able to command her feelings. "He would not even drink that liquor that you are swallowing now. He never touches any thing but water, and he tells us that it is drunkenness to take even a glass of wine, two or three times a day."

"Hey day!" said Mrs Highheart, "why you little piece of impertinence! how dare you speak in this manner to the child of a gentleman. I am sure, now, your father is a drunkard, from your being in such haste to defend him from the charge. Get you gone directly. I was going to send to the kitchen for a bit of corn bread for you, but I will not do it, because of your impudence.

Hetty had more than half a mind to reply, but she bit her lips and remained silent. She took her little sister by the hand, and quietly slipt out of the room. With some little trouble she found out the housekeeper, who treated her almost as insolently as Mrs Highheart. In spite of her wish to dispatch her business, and return home, she was unfeelingly detained until after the late dinner of the family. Not a morsel was offered her to eat, but she was accustomed to fast occasionally from breakfast till supper, if her time was very closely occupied. Little Sue felt hungry, but she did not complain. At length the price of the poultry was reluctantly paid, and the children sat off in a brisk pace to return home, for the sun was not more than an hour high.

As they passed by a bower at the bottom of the lawn, they heard deep groans, and sobs of the most distressing violence. The little girls peeped in, and saw a poor woman in all the agony of grief. She was dressed like a lady, but her features were remarkably plain, and as she stretched out her limbs, Hetty plainly perceived a wooden leg protruding from her petticoat. She instantly conjectured that this was poor Miss Jane Foster, the governess, who had been turned out of doors because she was not a skilful milliner. Hetty went up to her with a pang of compassion for her helpless situation, and unhesitatingly offered to assist her in walking to the place she meant to put up for the night. "I have no shelter upon the face of the earth," said the unfortunate woman, "and here I must remain and perish, for I am lame, and cannot seek an asylum before dark."

"Come along with me then," said Hetty. "I will secure you a night's lodging, and a kind reception. We are poor people its true, but we have something to spare, by the blessing of God."

At these words the forlorn creature raised her head, and said, "no my good girl, leave me here, to die! I have no means of returning your kindness, and I cannot bear to be a burden upon the poor and industrious." "But you will not be a burden to us," said Hetty; "we live poorly, its true, and perhaps you never were in so rude

and coarse a dwelling as ours, but it contains happy and grateful hearts. I would not at this moment exchange situations with the heiress of this fine house, nor would I for worlds, feel as its proud mistress must now do; come on, the sun is getting low, and my mother will be uneasy if I stay longer. Susan dear, do you take the lady's bundle, and I will help her to walk."

So saying, the good natured girl persisted in urging the distressed and disconsolate Miss Foster to accompany her home. With great difficulty she succeeded in gaining her point, and the broad ruddy disk of the full moon had gained the tops of the trees, before the party halted at the door of Andrew Reynolds's cottage. "What in the world has kept you so long, Hetty?" said her mother; "I was just going to set out to meet you, for I have really been uneasy at your long absence, and who have you brought with you, my child? But she is welcome, whoever she may be," added she, kindly, taking the hand of the sobbing Miss Foster, who made no attempts to suppress her emotion. "Mother," said Hetty, "she is an unfortunate stranger, and I knew you would take her in." "Most surely I will," said Maggy, with alacrity. "She is welcome to all the comforts of our homely cottage. We have food in plenty, and a good warm shelter; thanks be to Him who gave it, and those who need

what we have, shall never pass by our door." "Come in, Miss Foster, and make yourself comfortable," said Hetty, who knew the perfect sincerity of her excellent mother, "come in and sit down, for you must be weary." In a little while the unhappy stranger was seated in an old elbow chair, (the seat of honor,) with all the family gathered round her in silent sympathy.

Maggy was the first to break silence. "And so Hetty," turning to her daughter, "you and little Sue had the honor of dining at Highheart hall to-day. No doubt you saw a great many fine things." "Yes, indeed, mother, we did, but you mistake about the dinner, for neither Susan nor I have tasted a mouthful since we left home. I am not very hungry myself, but I am afraid the poor child is half famished. Shall I get her something to eat, or will you do it yourself?" "Come, my Sue," said her mother, moving towards the press, "your little stomach is not used to fasting, and I wish you may not get sick; but here, child, take this can of milk and this bit of fresh bread, and Hetty, here is the like for you; its more wholesome than meat for an empty stomach." Hetty advanced towards Miss Foster, and politely inquired if she would refresh herself, after her fatiguing walk, with some bread and milk. The poor woman's tears flowed afresh, but yet she received the refreshment, and seemed to

relish it greatly. "I too have tasted nothing since breakfast," said she, "and this food is most acceptable to me.

After the hungry trio had been sufficiently recruited, Maggy called to Hetty to follow her to help milk the cow. "I would have done it before you came," said she, "but I felt a pain in my shoulder, and was afraid it would become worse by exertion." As the mother and daughter quitted the house, they were met by Andrew Reynolds. Hetty put her arm in his, and drew him toward the cow shelter, where she hastened to reveal at length the occurrences of the day."

"The father," said she, "never did I before feel so forcibly the truth of what you have told me often, that great wealth corrupts the heart and deprives people of the power of virtuous enjoyment, if you had heard and seen what I have to-day, it would have made your heart sick."

"Alas! my child," said Andrew, "The Lord alone can make any thing virtuous or respectable, out of the corrupt race of man. When His Holy Spirit visits the human heart, there arises within it a fresh spring of feeling which tends towards holiness—but all virtue is foreign to our nature, and our hearts require careful cultivation to make them bring any fruits that savor of goodness. But let this occurrence increase our thankfulness, and let us return and give a cordial greeting to this unhappy victim of cruelty and caprice." So saying, the truly good

man hastened to his humble cottage, and took the hand of his new guest with as much respect as if she had been a princess. "You are heartily welcome Miss Foster to my humble dwelling; remain here, I entreat you, as long as you find such a residence convenient. I am, it is true, what the world calls a poor man, but I am rich in what is a scarce commodity on earth, that is happiness. My Heavenly Father has been abundantly kind to me in many things, and in none more, than in withholding from me that wealth which makes so many wretched; aye, and worse than wretched, which makes so many creatures selfish and unfeeling."

Miss Foster again wept, and sobbed out her thanks in a voice scarcely articulate. She was sufficiently accustomed to the jargon called religion by worldly people; but of the genuine fruits of faith, she knew absolutely nothing. Little did she dream when she thought herself established in an eligible post in a rich family, that her destiny would so soon compel her to accept an asylum with the poorest man in the vicinity. This unfortunate female had been exposed through life to evil examples, and her mind and disposition were consequently formed on the worst patterns. She had at one period of her early life been a person of some consequence, and for a brief season was feasted upon the incense of flattery; but the death of her parents and the insolvent state of their property,

threw her at once upon the tender mercies of those who had formerly been her adulators. When people of this description are thrown out of employment by the sudden downfal of those whom they have been accustomed to flatter, they then display wonderful pliancy of character, and can exact incense from their inferiors with as much ease as they once bestowed it on their superiors.

But the very day after the arrival of Miss Jane Foster, at Andrew Reynolds' she was taken very ill, and the benevolent farmer was forced to incur considerable expense during the progress of her disease. Ho procured medical aid, and purchased without repining, every thing that was necessary for her, and after her recovery found himself in debt for the first time in his life.

This really was a trial to honest Andrew, who had always made it a principle to live within his income. He became for the first time in his life thoughtful, and even melancholy, and his wife partook his feelings, for there was a perfect reciprocity of sentiment and opinion between this truly happy pair.

One day when Miss Foster was getting better, Andrew had business in a neighboring village, and accordingly rose very early, that he might return the sooner from this unwonted excursion. He had accomplished his business and was returning homeward, when a stranger

put a letter in his hand, and asked if he was the person mentioned in the direction.

Andrew opened the letter in some surprise, almost fearing to break the seal, lest he should find it was intended for a different person of the same name. But on perusing the contents he was agreeably surprised to find that it was from an acquaintance of his in a distant part of the country informing him that an old uncle of his had lately died and bequeathed to each of his nephews the sum of an hundred dollars, as a legacy. The letter enclosed a draft upon a merchant in town for the money.

Andrew's honest heart overflowed with gratitude, when he found himself thus providentially released from his burden of debt, and as much money left as would meet the exigencies likely to accrue from the unexpected addition to his family. He hastened to receive cash for his order, and discharged on the spot, all his little debts, which had been incurred at the stores in the village. He then purchased a few oranges for the invalid, and hastened home with a heart lightened of the only burden it had ever borne, and full to overflowing of chastened delight.

As he came within sight of the cottage, he overtook his wife returning from some errand from the other part of the farm. She looked sad, and Andrew bounded towards her with a joyful exclamation, which at once arrested her attention. "Good news! good news! dear

Maggy! my debts are all paid, and my heart is whole again." He then drew his wife's arm in his, and related circumstantially the events of the day.

Maggy's mild blue eyes filled with tears, as she first glanced them at her husband, and then raised them upwards to heaven, as if it was robbing her heavenly father of his just due, to waste a thought even upon her best beloved friend on earth, until she had poured forth prayers and thanksgiving to God. After a silent gush of devout feelings, she turned to Andrew, and exclaimed, "Oh my husband, what shall we return unto the Lord, for his manifold mercies! "We cannot say, my dear wife, in the words of David, that *we* will receive the cup of salvation: for I trust we have already received the seal of the covenant; but we may say, that we will endeavor to induce others to drink at the well spring of immortal life. Oh my Maggy, what would we not do to convert our unfortunate guest from the errors of unbelief. Providence has made us instrumental in saving her mortal part. Oh that we may be made the blessed instruments of bringing her never dying soul from darkness unto light. Let us strive without ceasing to accomplish this good, and in that way we shall best thank our father for his especial goodness unto us, his unworthy creatures. "Yes, my dear Andrew," said the weeping wife, I have long thought that this scheme was agitat-

ing your mind. I have had my own secret promptings that way, and so has our dear Hetty. Even to day, the thing was been thought of, I assure you, and I was going to tell you something pleasing of our dear daughters, when your good tidings put it all out of my poor weak head."

"You must know that poor Miss Jane has been a good deal better to-day, I was washing in the outer room, and overheard her talking to Hetty. And, oh Andrew, 'twas well the Lord put it in our hearts to warn the dear child so much against vanity, or this poor, godless stranger would have done sad mischief in our harmless family. She was thanking Hetty for taking so much care of her, and she made her unlock the trunk that you brought with the poor things clothes from Highheart hall. So she pulled out a muslin gown and offered it to Hetty. I could hear every word she said for I thought it no harm to listen, so I washed as quietly as I could without splashing the water about, and sent the two little girls out to pick up chips. 'Hetty,' said Miss Jane, 'you are a very pretty girl indeed, and if you could once cast off that odious home spun gown, you would absolutely look like a lady.'"

"'Now I will help you to alter this gown, and I am sure you have only to put it on and go abroad, to have all the young men at your feet. I noticed how young Mr Hardy stared at you the day after I came here. You knew he called

to pay your father some money, and I observed him look at you with all his eyes. I know the world, and can give a pretty good guess at a young gentleman's thoughts from his countenance. Now when you dress up in this gown and go to the races in the village next month, you will fall just in his way. He is a gentleman of family and fortune, and you would be a lady and ride in your carriage at once. Trust me Hetty, there is nothing like a little management. Things might go on forever in the same dull homely way, if people were not to use a little contrivance in bringing about desirable events. Now you might plod on forever in that coarse dress, and no one in the world would know how pretty you were. But I have laid a nice plan for bringing you into notice. Leave me to coax your father to get you a pair of store stockings and morocco shoes, with this gown, and your hair tucked up with my comb (which I mean to lend you for the occasion,) and a pretty artificial flower in your head, which I will give you, I am pretty certain you will be the handsomest young woman in the village.'"

"Well, husband, you may be sure my heart fluttered a little, 'till I heard the dear child's answer. She did not speak at once, and I own I trembled somewhat. But presently all came out, and my fears were turned to rejoicings."

"'My good Miss Jane,' said Hetty, 'you are very welcome to all I have done for you. It

was all done, I trust, in a Christian spirit, and whatever we do for the Lord, brings its own reward. But I must beg you not to be offended when I tell you that nothing in the world would tempt me to dress in the way you propose, and go to the races you speak of: it's true they are places of common resort, and all descriptions of people meet and mingle at them, so that I should, no doubt, see a good many persons of my own class in society; but races are dissipated, gaming, drunken places, where no well bred *Christian* at least would go. I am sure I should be miserable in such a scene, if I was compelled to witness it, and as for putting myself in the way of a young man far above me in station, why, I should deserve to lose my reputation, if I took such a step. I have read in books, that young women sometimes manœuvre to get husbands, but I always thought it an odious practice. Marriages, to be happy, must be made in heaven, and I have often thought that many a couple matched by their Maker, have been parted by these contrivances, and each party condemned to misery for their sinful conduct. Besides, I don't wish to marry. I am so perfectly happy here. No, my dear Miss Jane, these practices you recommend to me, would only make me miserable, for I never should know peace of conscience, after I had stooped to practise cunning, and departed from the plainness in which I have been educated.'"

'Well certainly,' said Miss Jane, 'you are a strange young woman, you talk as if there was something heinous in what I propose, and I'm sure much worse things are done and thought very clever and very proper in the great world.

Why, I know a lady who dressed up her daughter very fine, and carried her to the Springs, where she passed her off for a large fortune. She became a great belle of course, and succeeded in catching one of the best matches in the state. Her mother told me that if she had missed her aim, she should have been reduced to beggary, for she mortgaged the very house over her head for money to carry the plan into operation. Every body thought it a wonderful clever thing.' 'But suppose it had failed,' said Hetty, 'such a plan as that could not be sanctioned by providence, every thing that bears the stamp of untruth and deception is wrong, and cannot be prospered by divine goodness. And how must the young lady have felt when her husband found out the cheat. Oh I think she must have been ready to die with shame.'

'No such thing I assure you,' said Miss Jane, 'the young lady managed as well as her mother. She cried bitterly, and told her husband, that she fell in love with him at first sight, and should have died if he had not married her. So he was highly flattered by this declaration,

and forgave the fraud. 'So that was deceit upon deceit,' said Hetty, 'I have always been thankful, that I did not belong to the highest class of society, and I rejoice at it more than ever.'

"Surely there can be no peace of conscience where sin is openly sanctioned, and without that I have no conception of happiness." At this part of the discourse, little Susan went into the room, and told her sister, she would sit by the lady, and let her go to the loom. As soon as Hetty left the room, Miss Jane began again to talk of fine ladies and fine things. She asked Susan, if she did not think the muslin gown a beautiful one, and on her assenting to the inquiry, she began. "Well Susan, I see that you will be my girl after all. You have more taste already than your sister Hetty. Who would think of a young girl of 16 rejecting an offer to dress her handsomely, and send her into company. I'll declare I could hardly believe my ears, but you Susan, have more sense as well as taste: I will alter this gown into a frock for you, and give you all the things I intended for your strange sister.'

'Oh said Susan with simplicity, I don't like finery any better than sister Hetty. We have been brought up to think it wrong, to dress above our circumstances. Only suppose I was to appear in public in such a dress as this, with my grown sister dressed in calico, which is the

only thing father lets us wear from the store. How ridiculous I should look, and what is worse, how ridiculous I should feel. Every body would blame father for dressing us so extravagantly, for you know people would never find out that he did not purchase these things, and if they did, the blame would fall upon me, and I should be ashamed and confounded either way.

'No Miss Jane, I thank you kindly, but I have no desire to wear fine clothes. If I was to become fond of such things, they would corrupt my heart. Now you know if I were to accept this dress it would soon wear out. The near path to our church is very rough and full of thorns. Father laughed and said to me last Sunday, when I got hung in a thorn bush, and he came to help me out, 'well Sue, if you had been a fine lady you would have been torn to pieces.' So you see there is some advantage in being too poor to wear muslins and silks. One such tug from the thorn bush would destroy this delicate thing, and then, I should have to return to my home spun, and every body would laugh. If I had felt pleased with the muslin, I should be sorry for its destruction you know; then why should I do a thing that would be likely to make me unhappy in the end. Besides, Miss Jane, our dear Saviour, when he was on earth, never wore fine clothes, and the people who went about with him, never felt the want of them, I'm

sure. The bible says nothing about silks and muslins, and we are told that the rich man who dressed in purple and fine linen, went to a bad place, when he died, whereas the beggar who wore rags, was carried up to Abraham's bosom. I always think when I see a fine dressed person, that their finery is wrong, because the Scripture does not approve it.' 'Well child,' said Miss Jane, 'pray, don't preach to me; religion is such a melancholy thing, that it always makes me unhappy; talk about something else I beg of you.'"

"You may suppose," continued Maggy, "that my heart swelled with thankfulness, when I found how strong our dear children were in the faith we have labored to teach them. But come on Andrew, it is late, and we must hasten homewards."

We are happy to tell the reader, that Miss Jane Foster had only been spoiled by *bad* (alias fashionable) company. Her heart was not thoroughly corrupted. When she mingled again with the humble family with whom she had found a home, their conversation was studiously sensible and pious. Every word seemed especially prepared for her instruction, and although some things were repugnant to her preconceived prejudices, yet there were truths scattered over the simple wisdom of the cottagers, which glittered like gems from the mine. The unfortunate woman discovered, that the life she

had struggled so hard to lead, was one of misery and shame.

She had been the humble follower and flatterer of the great ever since her early youth, when her parents had died insolvent, and left her to the mercy of the world. All the sentiments she had acquired in the course of her mistaken education, had served only to harden her heart, and corrupt her principles. She had supposed it impossible to endure life without wealth and consequence; and fashion, that *Minotaur*, which has slain more than the fabled monster of Crete, was the idol of her misguided imagination. But the plain, clear reasoning of Andrew Reynolds, aided by the example of his family, gave light to the benighted mind, and spoke truth irresistably to the awakening intellects of the deserted female. She had been carefully instructed in some useful things, but her mind had been overrun with the noxious weeds of folly. She listened to Andrew's expositions of Holy Writ, until she became fully convinced of the precious truths contained in the Bible. She read and wept; for whoso believes in revelation must feel the sting of sin in the core of his heart. None can be deceived with the mirror of truth before them. Such was the anguish of her first convictions, that Andrew Reynolds kindly prepared his favorite minister to speak comfort to her drooping and desponding heart. He explained her situation

to his pastor, who visited the soul sick penitent again and again, before she could lift her head, to view the prospect before her. At length however peace dawned upon her harassed bosom. She felt that she was accepted by the Saviour of sinners; and from that moment she became a new being.

Miss Jane now began to cast about in her mind, some method of indemnifying the family to whom she owed, not only the preservation of her life, but the still dearer prospect of an eternal state of blessedness. She found that the children wanted a regular instructor, and from that time, she became their steady and skilful preceptress.

Things were going on as usual in this happy family, when they were surprised by a visit from Mr Marmaduke Highheart. Lest the reader should be too much astonished by hearing of this marvellous condescension on the part of the rich man, we will explain the true cause without delay. Mr Highheart had become a candidate for Congress, and it is one of the blessings of a republic, that the poorest man in the country can keep a check upon the conduct of the greatest by watching his behavior.

Mr Highheart had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. He had been assailed on the public court green by hootings and hissings from the sovereign people, who accused him of turning a helpless, crippled female

out of doors, just as night was coming on. Now it happened that the gentleman was actually absent at the time of this outrage on humanity; which had been perpetrated solely by his wife. He therefore denied the whole affair with every appearance of candour. Andrew Reynolds, who was universally respected by his county men, was now called forward to testify to the truth of the charge brought against the candidate for Congress. He spoke modestly, and after assuring the people that *he* had never mentioned it before, he narrated the whole circumstance just as it occurred.

Mr Highheart bit his lips with pride and vexation, both of which he was forced to suppress before the plebian arbiters of his destiny. After making a vain attempt to rally his self-possession, he was forced to declare confusedly that he was ignorant of the whole matter. "I can prove that I was absent from home at that time, said he, and then surely no blame can rest on me." "Oh but I don't say that," said a half intoxicated freeholder, "its my maxim that a man should bear some of the blame of his wife's misdeeds; for you see, if he managed her properly, she could not do these things, and if he don't keep her in order, why, he deserves to be blamed for it. Marmaduke looked ghastly with suppressed rage at this speech, but the truth was, his wife was so completely the director of his establishment. that according to a

common but expressive saying, "he could not call his soul his own." He had married an heiress, who was continually reminding him that the property was all her own.

Mr Highheart hastened home, with a determination to make a vigorous exertion in behalf of his long resigned freedom. He began to feel the ignominy of being governed by his wife. Many people can bear such things as long as they are kept secret, but when the world discovers them, they become unendurable.

Marmaduke found his wife at her toilette, preparing to go to a wedding party in the neighborhood. He found his courage rather low, and therefore determined to dash head long into the controversy, in hopes of taking the lady by surprise.

"Mrs Highheart," said he resolutely, "do you know, that I have been publicly hooted and hissed to day, in consequence of its being said, that a forlorn and crippled female was turned from my house to perish?"

"That is impossible," said the lady carelessly, "the creature did not perish, she is alive and well they tell me, living upon ash bread and buttermilk at some poor peasant's house—sleeping on straw and teaching his children their A B C. It is exactly such a situation as she was fitted for. I rejoice to hear she is so suitably accommodated."

"Well then," said her husband, "you may

bid adieu to the prospect of spending your next winter in Washington. It is said all over the county, that this Miss Foster, or whatever you call her, was picked up by some poor children, and carried to their father's house, where she has since been taken care of. The affair has prejudiced people so much against me, that I've no chance of being elected to Congress, that's all. You've taken your own wise way in this business, and you must bear the consequences as you can."

But the lady had set her heart upon going to the Seat of Government, and the chance of a disappointment in this her favorite plan, was gall and bitterness to her selfish heart. She pondered some time in silence, at length she looked up and said. "This is a provoking mischance, but I think it may be remedied. I would go to the house where she stays, and invite her back; but really I do dread exposing myself to the vulgar wretches she lives among. I'll send, and invite her to return; she'll come in a moment, for I know her proud heart can ill brook the society she has been condemned to. I've wanted her back for some time, for the creature was really useful to me, and this is the very time I want her most, to help prepare me for the City." "Well! well!" said her husband, "do your best, but I tell you, that unless this stain is wiped off my character in some way, you will never see Washington City as the

lady of a member of Congress. These sovereign people are terrible bores it must be acknowledged; but since I have embarked in this troublesome business, I can only do my best to get along with as much profit and as little trouble as possible."

That very evening Mrs Highheart's confidential maid, arrived at Andrew Reynolds, with a condescending invitation to Miss Jane to return to the hall, and a gracious present of a piece of second hand finery. The woman returned to her mistress, with the strange intelligence, that her invitation was civilly rejected, and her present returned. She also reported to the astonishment of Mrs Highheart, that she found Miss Jane singing hymns, and looking as happy as a queen. "She bade me tell you mam, that she had found some jewel or other of great price, and was rich enough to do without your present."

Mrs Highheart was astonished beyond measure. She actually rose, and put on her things with the intention of going to the cottage herself, but on hearing that the road was impassable to the carriage, she gave up her plan and summoned Mr Highheart to her presence. "Marmaduke," said she, "I have heard strange news; Jane Foster refuses my present and my invitation. She sends me word she has found a treasure, and is no longer an object of charity. Tell your master exactly what passed," said she to the maid,

"for I acknowledge your account puzzled me not a little." The maid accordingly repeated her story, at which Marmaduke smiled, "I know what she means well enough," said he, "she has found "the pearl of great price," in other words, she has become religious. Are you so little acquainted with the cant of hypocrisy that you don't understand it? When people are poor and contemptible, they fancy themselves wonderfully virtuous, having no money to spend on pleasure, they pretend to dislike it. That is to say, like the Fox in the fable, when they can't reach the grapes, they say they are sour."

"Oh ho! is that all! I comprehend it now! well, if you will go, and ask the girl to come back, I know she will. Carry her this gauze handkerchief, it's quite new. Perhaps she has grown too proud to wear my cast-offs, and she might have been offended by my sending her an old cape."

We have now fully explained to the reader the cause of Mr Highheart's visit to the cabin of Andrew Reynolds. He endeavored to appear gracious, but the attempt sat awkwardly upon him. After a little general confabulation, he asked Miss Foster to return to his family, adding that it was his intention to allow her a liberal salary. She hesitated a little, and looked as if she was unwilling to speak before the family. Andrew perfectly understood her meaning. "Come wife," said he, "you and I, and

the children will take ourselves off and work in the garden, 'till these two have said their say." Immediately the whole party moved off, without any of these longing, lingering looks that denote curiosity.

"Mr Highheart," began Miss Foster, "I was indebted to these excellent people for a shelter, when I was turned friendless, moneyless and a cripple, from your door. They nursed me with humane care, through a tedious and expensive illness—and what is more than all, they taught me how to prepare for eternity. I feel that my services are important to their children, who are undoubtedly the most docile pupils I ever had, and I mean not to forsake them until they have ceased to require my care. Here I meet with constant and respectful kindness; my food is simple to be sure, but it is wholesome and abundant; my lodging is hard, but never in my life did I enjoy such rest on a down bed. I have made one great discovery in this hut, (which no doubt appears so destitute of advantages to you;) it is this, that the more we minister to the capricious wants of our senses, the more unhappy we become; and on the other hand those who live temperately and nourish their immortal parts, become daily more and more content with their earthly lot. I am now determined with the grace of God, to nourish my soul with heavenly food, and to keep under my body and bring it into subjection. Re-

turn this piece of unnecessary apparel to your lady with thanks. Tell her, I am now fully aware of the folly and wickedness of attempting to adorn a poor, homely, mutilated body. Nothing can ever again seduce me to the like folly."

Mr Highheart was astonished; he was not a weak man, though prosperity had spoiled him. His father had educated him with an especial view to his marrying an heiress; of course the poor fellow had learned little that was really useful.

Miss Anastasia Ringold, was born with brilliant prospects. Her father had dexterously manœuvred, so as to get out of his way a child, who would have been the competitor of his daughter. His elder brother had made a large fortune in the East Indies, and returned from that deadly climate just time enough, to lay his body in his native earth, after bequeathing his fortune to the two only children of his only two brothers. At the time of his death, one of his heiresses (Miss Anastasia) was only five years old, and her partner in good fortune, Miss Sophia Margaret, was double that age. But the father of the last mentioned girl was dead, and she was left to the care of Anastasia's parent. The two little girls lived together several years, at the end of which time, Major Ringold, Anastasia's father, took his niece to Philadelphia, to put her in a fashionable Boarding School. Every one applauded his conduct, and most peo-

ple sympathized with the disconsolate uncle, when he returned in deep mourning, and related with many tears, that his niece had died suddenly on the road, to her place of destination. He brought home some of her clothes, and a few locks of her curling tresses, which he kept always in his room and suffered no one to touch. Some people indeed, refused to believe this statement, alleging that Major Ringold, was an artful ambitious man, and capable of any thing to accomplish his avaricious designs; but his daughter grew up a great belle, and married Mr Highheart, a young man of great family and slender expectations.

We have already seen how little use this gentleman made of the conjugal privileges, for his wife assumed to herself, from the first, the right of disposing of her wealth. Her father died, and nothing more was thought of the report concerning his conduct to his niece. Mr Highheart, by his wife's direction, built a grand house upon a valuable farm of hers at the foot of the Ridge, and all things went on smoothly for many years.

The young girl, mentioned as niece to Mr Highheart, was entitled to a smart fortune, which her uncle's wife was endeavoring to take into the family compact, by some means or other. The reader has already had some hints of this, from the conversation formerly retailed, as having taken place in Mrs Highheart's dressing room.

After this digression we will return to the conversation between Mr Highheart and Miss Jane Foster. Finding the lady *really* changed, Marmaduke took another way of gaining his point. He threw the rejected present carelessly on a table, and proceeded to offer Miss Jane money, with a view to *purchase* her good opinion. Great indeed was his surprise, when she refused positively to accept what is so rarely rejected by those who have it not.

"I have told you sir," said she, with dignity, "that I have discovered 'the pearl of great price,' and I want no other wealth. At least, I want nothing but what I can honestly earn. If I *do* accept favors, it must be from my master's servants, and these alone.

Mr Marmaduke Highheart felt at that moment, as if he could have contradicted Solomon's assertion, "there is nothing new under the Sun." One thing was certain, that the novelty of Miss Foster's conduct had filled him with genuine surprise. He returned home in what is vulgarly called a brown study. Before he had gotten ten steps from the door, little Susan followed him with the rejected handkerchief, which he had thrown on the table, and forgotten. He turned away saying carelessly "keep it child, I give it to you freely." "But I don't want it sir." "Then give it to your sister or your mother." "Neither of them would wear such a thing sir," said the pertinacious little

girl. "Take it home sir, I beg you, no one here uses such things." So saying, she forced it into his hands, and fled swiftly back to her happy home.

Marmaduke had the satisfaction of finding his wife rather humbled by details furnished in the gossipping circles around her. She had heard the affair represented in striking colors.—"Plague on the people," said she, "I thought I was to have every thing my own way in the country, and I find the brutes much more unmanageable than our town's people. I wish in my heart, I had never come here."

The hardy, independant yeomanry of Virginia are not accustomed to submit to aristocratic insolence, and we hope they never will be.

Mrs Highheart actually cried with vexation when she heard her husband's account of Miss Foster's conduct. "Why surely," said she, "the creature must be utterly changed; she would have licked the dust from my feet, when she was here!"

Miss Jane Foster was indeed changed. She had experienced the new birth. She had passed from darkness into light, and she now saw, that God and not man, had a right to her submissive obedience, and her most faithful services.

Two years passed away, without any remarkable occurrence. The humble family of Andrew Reynolds continued to grow in holiness and in-

crease in felicity. Miss Jane finding her services truly valuable to the family in which she resided so peacefully, desired no change, and Mrs Highheart had ceased to solicit her company. About this time, Miss Anastasia Highheart died of the measles. Her death was thought to be occasioned more by her excessive fretfulness, than by the disease itself. From what we have seen of this young lady, we cannot suppose that she was regretted by any person except her parents. But her mother was in absolute despair at this event. She had loved this, her only child, with an idolatrous affection, and had been perfectly insensible to the unamiable traits of her character. Mr Highheart had failed in his attempt to be elected to Congress. The sturdy honesty and humanity of the Freeholders had held out against the blandishments of this courtier-like candidate, whose efforts to win their favor had proved utterly unsuccessful. His unfortunate domestic situation had entirely destroyed the little good that was inherent in his character. He became heartless and dissipated, so that the death of his child made but a transient impression on him.

One night, while Mrs Highheart was dangerously ill, a stranger arrived at this mansion of luxury and selfishness. He obtained entrance with great difficulty, but he seemed determined to gain his point. On hearing of the

state of the mistress of the mansion, he seemed much agitated. "I was her father's confidential agent," said he, "and would be greatly obliged to any of you who would procure me a view of the lady." "That is impossible," said the servants, rudely. "Indeed, sir, to tell the truth, you had better go elsewhere, since your company is but little desired here." This rude speech apparently silenced the intruder, who soon left the house, without an invitation to remain, though it was near dark when he set out.

The stranger wandered about in the woods until night shut in upon him. There was every likelihood of a severe storm, and large, broad drops of rain began to fall from the clouds. He proceeded at random, and was at length arrested by a chorus of voices issuing from some house, which the darkness concealed almost entirely. He paused, and distinguished the words and tune of a hymn. "Here then, at least," said he to himself, "I can find the shelter that I seek, for this is the abode of the people of God. I will go no farther." A gentle knock was instantly answered by the man of the house, who was no other than our friend Andrew Reynolds. He courteously invited the stranger to enter, and take a seat by the fire. "You will be welcome to stay all night," said he, "if you can put up with such homely accommodations as I can afford you."

Andrew had added a shed to his house, it is true, since the commencement of our story, but even that did not greatly enlarge the commodiousness of his establishment.

The stranger, however, seemed pleased with his reception, and graciously saluted every member of the household. He took a seat by Mrs Reynolds, and seemed to gaze on her with looks of recognition. After some little discourse, the stranger announced himself by the name of Harper. "I have come into this part of the country," said he, "to find out the only child of a very old friend, with whom I wished to spend the rest of my days. But I found her dangerously ill, and her insolent servants almost turned me from the door. Mr Highheart, who lives in this neighborhood, married the daughter of my old friend, Major Ringold." At the mention of this name, both Mr and Mrs Reynolds started. "I was not, at *first*, the friend of the Major," said he, "but of a brother who died young, and left his only child to the care of this gentleman. A third brother, of great wealth, left his fortune to two little girls, the only children of his only brothers. Major Ringold was the guardian of his little niece, who was co-heiress with his own daughter. For her sake, I continued to live in his family, till at length the interesting orphan was cut off by death, at an early age. I then quitted that part of the country in which she had lived,

and have since been a wanderer upon the face of the earth. But old age and infirmities have borne me down, and I came here, hoping to find an asylum with the daughter of Major Ringold."

Mrs Reynolds in vain endeavored to conceal her agitation during this speech. The stranger perceived it, and seemed to catch the infection of her emotion.

"If I do not dream, or dote," said he, "there is something in your matronly features, my dear madam, that forcibly reminds me of my dear Sophia Margaretta Ringold." "You are not deceived, my father's dear friend," said Maggy, throwing herself on the bosom of the old man. "I am the daughter of Henry Ringold, and well do I remember his friend and constant associate, Clarence Harper!" "The same! the same!" sobbed the stranger. "I am Clarence Harper, and my old heart throbs beneath your touch, as if all its pulses were grown young again."

This scene continued some time, and excited the sympathy of all who were present. The children wept when the good old man folded them to his bosom. Andrew himself shed tears of real feeling. When composure was restored to the little assembly, Mr Harper inquired of Maggy by what strange fatality she had been preserved through all the vicissitudes of her life.

"I have been the child of Heaven," said she.

"Most truly can I declare, that the Lord himself is the father of the fatherless. You know my uncle carried me away, under pretence of putting me to a fashionable boarding-school. His manners were such as to disarm suspicion, had it existed; but I was far too guiltless by nature, to apprehend evil at his hand. We travelled a great way, and frequently I was too much fatigued to be willing to go on; but still we proceeded with indefatigable speed, for many days. At length, we stopped at a solitary house in the midst of a forest. Here I was seriously indisposed, and my uncle showed a good deal of solicitude about my situation. One night he gave me something which he said would make me sleep. "I trust," said he, "you will be able to travel, after a good night's rest." He kissed me on leaving my room, and cut off several locks of hair from my head, and I saw him depart, without a shadow of suspicion. The opiate he administered was so strong, that I believe it would have thrown me into an eternal sleep, had I not luckily thrown some of it up, from a nausea of the stomach. As it was, I slept nearly twenty-four hours, and awoke with a confused mind and an exhausted body. The woman of the house attended me with something more than humanity—with kindness.

"To all my inquiries respecting my uncle, she answered that he was in the house, but had sprained his ankle, and could not ascend the

steep stairs which led to my room. This friendly stratagem favored my recovery greatly, for I have often thought my illness would have terminated fatally, if I had been aware of my deserted state. At length, however, it became necessary to disclose the disastrous intelligence. The good woman of the house, who had taught me to call her mother Martha, informed me, that my uncle had departed without settling his tavern bill, the morning after he took leave of me, as I have related. She expected him back for a long time, but at length finding a bank note in his chamber, to the amount of his expenses, the truth began to break upon her mind. For my own part, I soon conceived a suspicion that he had intended to take away my life, and I should have been afraid to return to him again, if such a thing had been practicable.

"Mother Martha, as I still called her, was a true parent to me. She had but one child, and she made me welcome to a home in her house. But she was poor, and picked up a scanty pittance by entertaining accidental travellers, and working a small piece of poor ground. Her son was educated by a benevolent society, and I myself, was, after a time, indebted to the same source for all the information I possess. A benevolent lady, who was directress of the above society, took a fancy to me, and had me instructed in many things that were not taught at the charity school. I had also the advantage

of attending a Sabbath School, and to that blessed institution am I indebted for the religion that has cheered me and strengthened me through life.

"The young lady who superintended my class, was aware of my deserted state, and she therefore took particular pains to lead my mind to place unshaken trust in the King of Kings. Under her judicious instruction, I trust I became a real Christian, and having learnt to consider myself the peculiar charge of the Lord, because I was deserted by man, I ceased to feel forlorn and unhappy. I became useful to my dear mother Martha, and was happy enough to be able to render her such services in her old days, as only a female could have rendered. I said she was my mother *indeed;* she was the parent of my beloved husband. We grew up together, and our attachment was rooted and grounded, long before we knew the nature of our reciprocal affections.

"Our mother died at length, and we retreated from the dreary remote spot, which had now lost its only charm to us. We came to this State, and have here enjoyed as pure felicity, as ever fell to the lot of mortals. We determined to bring up our children in the plainest manner possible, and therefore we never purchased any articles that bordered upon luxury, or even gentility. Whatever we could spare by this conscientious economy, we put into the treasury of

the Lord, hoping to receive the interest of it in another world. Until this night, I have never had the smallest suspicion that Mrs Highheart was my first cousin, and the person for whose sake my uncle committed the crime of casting off the offspring of his own brother."

"Ay," exclaimed Mr Harper, "and your uncle's will (of which I have a copy) is so worded, that if either of his co-heiresses dies without issue, the survivor is to inherit all the fortune. If your cousin dies, you are the undoubted owner of Highheart hall."

In fact, this excellent man never rested until he had fully substantiated the claim of Mrs Reynolds to the property left by Mrs Highheart, who died three days after the conversation we have just related. To the astonishment of all the world, the lowly family of Reynolds entered into legal possession of a great estate. They bore their honors so meekly, and did so much good with their large fortune, that they fully exemplified the power of religion to keep *down* the heart in prosperity, as well as to *keep* it up in adversity.

When Mr Reynolds took possession of his wife's fortune, the wretched Mr Highheart was found, in the house he had called his own, in a state of melancholy madness. The influence of unrestrained dissipation on a weak head, and badly cultivated morals, was such as to unsettle his reason thoroughly. Yet there was nothing

dangerous in his madness; it was simply an overthrow of the misused and abused powers of rationality. His successor was deeply touched by his accumulated sorrows, and would fain have retained him as an inmate of his old abode. But a short experiment proved that his sufferings were in no degree mitigated by this humane arrangement. On the contrary, every object around him seemed to recall the memory of those circumstances which had gradually worn away his reason, by their ceaseless recurrence.

He would saunter about the house with a melancholy aspect, and every now and then call his child as if she was still alive. When he found that no one answered the summons, he would appear to recollect himself, and exclaim, "Oh never mind. The poor thing is so cross and captious, I have no manner of satisfaction in her company. Let her stay with her mother. "Birds of a feather, they say, flock together." These two are more alike than any two people I ever saw. Heigh ho! I wonder if all children are as bad as mine. What a pity that young creatures who have no care upon their hearts, should be so ill-natured."

The children of Andrew Reynolds were so much affected by this melancholy spectacle of human weakness, that they forgot the advantages of their new situation, in endeavoring to alleviate his distress.

Andrew did not neglect so good an opportunity of giving a moral lesson to his children. He assembled them, and spoke as follows, with an air of deep solemity:

"My children, you now see before you a melancholy example of the insufficiency of wealth to procure happiness. This unfortunate man would probably have been happy and respectable, had he not been placed in an exalted station, where luxurious and indolent habits soon corrupted his principles, and destroyed first his peace, and then his reason. While this work of destruction was going on, we were living in an humble station, working hard and sleeping hard. Our food was coarse, and our comforts scant; but oh! my children, my ardent prayer to the Almighty is, that we may be as happy in this palace, (as we may call it) as we were in our rude hovel at the foot of the mountain. Remember while you live, the peace you then enjoyed. It was the peace which passeth understanding—the peace of conscience. If you keep yourself unspotted from the world, you may enjoy that peace even here; but if you once inhale the pestilential vapour of luxury, and begin to minister to the gratification of your senses, you are lost to all pure sources of enjoyment forever. Just in proportion as you keep under your body and hold it in subjection, will your soul be strong and healthy; but when sensual pleasure becomes dear or habitual to

you, a gradual decline of vital piety will be the infallible result.

"Let me then advise you, my dear children, to accustom yourselves to meditate, every day of your life, on the insufficiency of wealth to procure happiness. At present you will scarcely understand me, when I recommend as a safeguard to virtue, the steady practice of self-dênial. Formerly your indulgences were so rare, your abstemiousness from all luxury so habitual, from necessity, that you can have little idea of the effect produced by daily indulgence in all the genteel things to be procured by wealth. Let me then solicit your constant attention to this subject. When you feel disposed to relax too much, to taste too often of the pleasures within your reach, remember that constant familiarity with any pleasure produces satiety.

"Do you think this unfortunate gentleman enjoyed his rich wines, and his costly delicacies, after years of indulgence had sated his palate and destroyed his health? Assuredly not! It was even painful to him to swallow what had once been so delightful. The wine scorched his excoriated stomach, and the high seasoned food soured, and produced nausea as soon as it was swallowed. His bed of down was to him a couch of suffering, for his diseased body could derive no comfort from rest, and his tortured mind found no forgetfulness in slumber.

"His present situation fully exemplifies the

truths I am now expounding to you. I doubt not he would avouch every fact I have uttered, if his mind was not overclouded by insanity. But true wisdom takes warning from the experience of others.

"Let us begin moderately, and we shall probably go on in the same manner. But oh! remember to be watchful! Suffer not the smallest additional indulgence to slide in without notice. Where things can be procured without labor; where custom sanctions the lavish use of what are called the good things of life, we are always in danger of exceeding the measure of temperance and sobriety. We must consider our present situation as one in which we are exposed to double temptation, and must therefore maintain double vigilance over our senses; those inlets and outlets of sin and misery."

The children of Andrew Reynolds listened with undivided attention to this exhortation. They did not promise their father, but they promised *themselves*, that his advice should be scrupulously followed.

Two years passed away, and found this excellent family as steadily virtuous in prosperity as they had been in adversity. Hetty married Mr Hardy, the gentleman who had taken such an accurate survey of her features, as to attract the notice of Miss Jane Foster, the day after she became an inmate of the cottage under the mountain. Her father gave her a genteel mar-

riage portion, and fixed her near him, for he thought it one of the advantages of wealth, that he was enabled to keep his loved family together without inconvenience. Miss Jane went to reside with Mrs Hardy, for she always considered her the primary cause of her happy change of character.

Mr Harper took possession of the deserted cottage, and declared that there was a charm in the air of the spot where virtue had so long flourished in humble seclusion. His friends furnished his old age with every requisite comfort, and gave him what was more valuable than money, their society.

The income of Andrew Reynolds was considerable, but he retained none of it to enhance the principal of his fortune.

At the end of each year, he regularly paid the residue of his income into the treasury of the Lord, and thus added incalculably to the funds of every charitable institution.

The unfortunate Mr Highheart recovered his reason after two years confinement in the lunatic hospital. He would have been still kept in that dreary prison, for want of the means of subsistence, had not the benevolent Mr Reynolds taken on himself the charge of his maintenance. This gentleman removed him to his old suite of apartments, and made him cordially welcome as an inmate of the house where he had once presided in nominal

supremacy. And besides this act of charity to his perishing body, Andrew Reynolds labored unceasingly to enlighten his immortal soul. Arduous indeed was the task of removing the mass of prejudice and error that had been heaped upon the small light of Truth which ever exists in the natural heart.

It often happens that an irreligious education, and the habit of associating with irreligious people, completely smothers and stifles the inherent germ of truth in the human mind.

But there are a few favored individuals whose innate lights are sometimes rekindled after years of darkness and misery. Christian exertions are never more valuable than in the accomplishment of these apparently desperate revivals of the image of God when it has faded from the hearts of his creatures.

Nothing but the love of God, and a desire to promote his glory, can dictate the unremitting toils and persevering good offices requisite to recall apostate man to a sense of his errors. This divine love glowed as brightly in the heart of Mr Reynolds in his elegant mansion, as it had done in the homely cabin where his first years of happiness had passed.

Mr Highheart at length rewarded his persevering cares, by becoming a sincere convert to the religion of Christ.

After this blessed change, he took up his abode with the aged Mr Harper, and was fre-

quently heard to declare that the days of his residence in "Highheart hall" had been the most wretched of his existence. He used to tell Mr Reynolds sportively, that no earthly power would tempt him to exchange habitations with him. "Here I have peace indeed," said he, "and I verily believe it is entailed upon the cottage."

The frequent reports that prevailed in the neighborhood concerning the cottage of Andrew Reynolds, at length grew into a superstitious legend, which still attached itself to the place. Some affirmed that it was haunted by a benevolent spirit, which gave every one who lived in the cottage, a charm to secure happiness.

But the unbelievers in such supernatural appearances, asserted that the hut was built over the vein of a gold mine, and that its inhabitants derived their happiness, from having access to an abundant supply of this pleasure-giving metal.

Many years after the death of Mr Reynolds and his wife, their eldest son, who was now gray haired and wrinkled, was applied to by an old man of the vicinity to give a lease of the spot where the cottage stood, and its adjacent fields. The bargain was concluded, and one fine summer evening the good old master of Highheart hall, (which by the by, never was called by that name after the Reynolds' family possessed it,)

took a stroll towards the place where he had spent the happy years of infancy and childhood. The survivors of the family took a melancholy pleasure in making frequent pilgrimages to that spot, and always found their hearts made better by the train of thought that spontaneously sprung up within them, as they gazed on the huge oak tree which had once overshadowed the lowly hut that was their birth-place.

On this occasion, the anticipated reverie of the old man was interrupted, by finding several persons diligently employed in digging up the site of the cottage. "What means this sacrilege," thought he. But as he approached to inquire, the person who had leased the spot, drew near him in some confusion. "Master," said he, scratching his head and looking foolish, "pray don't be angry. The truth shall be told you, for we all know you'll sooner forgive *that*, than the best built up falsehood. You must know then, that the neighbors all have odd notions about that there place. Every body that has ever lived in that old house, has been happy and good, besides having money at will; so you see, sir, we conceited there must be *goold* or silver in the *yearth*, for *I* don't believe in charms and spirits! not I. But folks have always said, that your blessed father that's gone, used to talk mightily about some treasure that he had, which he always said "was above price." So we've just come to dig a bit, and if we find

it, you know it's all yours. We'll just take what you may please to give us for our pains."

Mr Reynolds smiled, and thus replied: "You will not find the treasure you seek *there*, my friend. Go home and look into your Bibles. There you'll see an account of that Pearl of great price, which was my father's only treasure when he lived in that cottage. If you are fortunate enough to discover it, you will inherit from it the peace that is better than gold or silver."

THE STRIFE OF TONGUES.

A TALE.

'Mrs Sawyer is a very curious woman,' said Miss Alice Pinkerton, one evening when a social party had assembled at her mother's. Now Mrs Pinkerton was a widow, who loved gossip as well as her daily bread. Nay, it was almost as necessary to her existence. She was never so happy as when she could muster a party of congenial spirits, solely for the purpose of recreating their tongues in this most familiar and pleasing exercise." This evening she had been eminently successful in raising recruits around her hospitable hearth.

'Mrs Sawyer is a very curious woman,' began the widow's eldest daughter, a short, red haired, freckled faced girl. Immediately upon the mention of Mrs Sawyer's name, every eye was kindled with a peculiar expression, which would have puzzled Lavater himself in his most skilful attempt to unravel the mysterious connexion between the human heart and the muscular arrangement of the features. The widow bristled up, and began to gather her brows in a dark frown; but whether at the subject or

the manner in which it was treated, remains to be ascertained. "Mrs Sawyer thinks a vast deal too much of herself, I know," said one—"and takes too much upon herself," says another.—"Only think of her setting up a new carriage," said one. "Ah! and new furnishing her house from top to toe. What an extravagant creature she must be, and so parading in her charities," said another. "I do hate to see that ostentation of hers, visible in every thing she does. Such an affectation of humility about her too, while, all the time she is as proud as Lucifer." "Well," exclaimed the widow, "these things must have an end one day. Poor thing, I pity her. She knows so little of the world! But one thing I know to a certainty," and she bent her head in a whisper, while her eyes sparkled with delight, "She will soon be rooted out bodily, and forced to sell every thing she has in the world to pay for her extravagance. Poor thing! I *do* pity her from my heart. But she never would take advice from me, tho' I have been a widow so much longer, and had so much more experience than she. I ventured to tell her in a friendly way, that she gave too much in charity, but she put on one of her provoking smiles, and said "I fear you are sadly misinformed, if you have heard any thing that makes you think so, said she. Oh no, said I, your generosity is so large, that it can't be hidden! (I said this because she loves a little bit of flat

tery dearly.) Oh no! every body knows that you gave 20 dollars to Mrs Foster, when her house was burnt. "I assure you, I did not give her one dollar in money, said she. I only gave some old things from my own family hoards, merely to serve until she could scuffle along and get new ones." Now, I knew the truth all the time, for my daughter was there and saw her take out great piles of new sheets and table cloths and towels, a great deal too fine for a poor woman's house. She even gave her a damask napkin, did'nt she Alice? Yes, mama—I saw one in her hand, I suppose she gave it to Mrs Foster. Now, continued Mrs Pinkerton, all this is because she wants new things. We shall soon hear of her having a quantity of fine new house linen to make up. Whenever she thinks her furniture is too coarse to be genteel, she gives it away to some poor person, who is directly puffed with pride and vanity to the very throat, and then buys new things of the first quality. I have known her to give away a 20 dollar crape to a poor widow, who never had had any thing better than a stuff gown in her life before. Here too, I ventured to advise her, telling her that the woman would be puffed up with pride, at being so much better dressed than her neighbors. But she answered me with the same hypercritical smile, saying, "indeed Mrs Pinkerton, the gown was almost threadbare. I would much rather have

given the poor creature a coarse stuff, but she wanted it to wear to her husband's burial, and I thought my old gown would be better than a colored dress, and she had no time, as you know, to make up a gown if she had had one. All this sounded well, but I knew the truth of the matter too well to be imposed upon."

"And another proof of her unjudicious charity, or rather ostentatious benevolence, has just come to my knowledge. You remember poor Mrs Wood left three daughters. Well, instead of leaving them to their relations, who were well enough able to bring them up, Mrs Sawyer must needs take one entirely to herself. Oh! how large it sounds, and how much it will be talked of. Now, I have not the least doubt but she will ruin the girl forever. My daughter Peggy heard her by chance the other day, lecturing Betsey Wood, and she told the child that she must hold up her head above the poor neighbors, for that now she lived with a person of importance, she was somebody, and must carry herself above the vulgar. Now, can you imagine a greater piece of folly." "And did you really hear this with your own ears, Miss Peggy," said one of the young ladies in a whisper to Mrs Pinkerton's second daughter. "La, no!" said the young lady, "mama's got the wrong story, but it's vain to attempt to set her right. I told her that Mrs Sawyer was reading aloud, when I came in the outer room, and I thought

she was talking to Betsey Wood, but she was only reading to the child out of the Parent's Assistant, when I came in, something about holding one's head above the vulgar.

Mama likes to have things to tell of Mrs Sawyer and her daughters so much, that she catches up every idle report she hears."

"And pray Mrs Pinkerton, what sort of a young lady is Miss Sawyer?" "Why, just such a person as you would suppose such a mother could bring up. Proud, and affected, and vain, and pedantic and ugly." "Oh mama, not *ugly*," exclaimed the young ladies. "Why, you surely forget she's a belle." "A *belle* indeed; a string of legs and arms hung on to a May Pole. Set up strait Alice. Tho' I *do* dislike *over* tall girls, yet you need'nt slouch so as to look like a dwarf. And then Miss Sawyer paints an inch deep." "Paints! mama! you surely mistake. She has a very vulgar color to be sure, but I've seen it come and go myself." "Ay! and you might have seen her maid fetching and carrying it besides." This sally raised a laugh throughout the room. "Poor Miss Sawyer," said another lady. "She does so *try* to be graceful. She swims across the room, and sets so languishing on the side of her chair, with such an affected cough, and a tap upon her breast bone every time she can raise that ghost of a cough." "That cough will make a ghost of her one of these days they say"—"Oh no! nothing is really

the matter with her, but it's *intristing* to have a cough and a hectic flush formed of vegetable rouge.

One lady here ventured to observe, that she had heard Mrs Sawyer was an excellent manager of servants. "Manager indeed," said the widow, "how on earth could she have got that character? But I know, she bribes her servants to praise her whenever she has company; she makes presents to her servants precisely at the right time, and her guests hear of nothing but her perfections from the poor deceived creatures. Besides, who can call it good management to keep one's servants idle? Her's dont earn the salt to their bread, I am certain. But she is *so* much afraid of censure—*so* anxious to be praised and admired, that she leaves no stone unturn'd to accomplish her object.—Poor woman! from my soul I pity her. She'll soon be ruin'd, every body says, by her own extravagance, and then what will become of her consumptive daughter I wonder. She'll be obliged to eat bacon and greens like some of her betters then. They say she turns pale at the smell of hog and hominy, now set her up for an affected piece."

"But seriously," said an old lady, who had hitherto taken little or no part in the colloquy. "But seriously ladies, Mrs Sawyer is a very sensible, improved, pious woman. As for her giving too much in charity, that's a thing that

concerns no one but herself. People are apt enough to think that those who give *less* than they do, give too little, and those who give *more* than they do, give too much. This arises from a desire that all men have; to think that *they* have attained the wise and judicious medium, while all their neighbors are either falling short or exceeding the proper measure. Some people remind me of the Tyrant Procrustes, in the use they make of their judgments. As he measured every one by his iron bedstead, and stretched or lopt them till they fitted, so these tenacious persons, stretch or lop their acquaintances till they have fitted them to the standard of their several tastes or judgments.

As for the particulars which have been mentioned concerning Mrs Sawyer, I believe some of them are known to me. She *did* give some old house linen to a poor woman of rather finer quality than would have suited her circumstances. 'Tis equally true, that there was a fragment of a damask napkin among the articles. The poor woman had been burnt out, and in addition to that misfortune, her only child lay ill of a disease that had taken its skin off from its whole body. It was necessary that the poor little sufferer should be wrapt in fine soft linen rags, and these were obliged to be changed several times a day, so that it was difficult to get enough for the purpose. Mrs Sawyer ransacked her hoards, and produced all the old linen

she could find. Besides this, she gave 5 dollars instead of 20, to the poor woman, which money she raised by selling a cap that had been sent her as a present. She did also give a 20 dollar crape to a poor widow. The woman had not a decent dress to put on to attend her husband's body to the grave, and Mrs Sawyer and her daughter rummaged up an old cast off black dress, and by dint of turning and eking and patching, a very tolerable dress was sent to the poor creature, just at the time she most wanted it. By her own ingenuity she afterwards dyed it so as to make it quite respectable, and to Mrs Sawyer's surprise, it served the poor creature for a Sunday dress, for a whole year. As to Miss Sawyer, "I must say for her, that she is one of the most unaffected girls I ever met with. Poor thing, I fear she will not long be spared to her mother or to society."

These remarks were uttered without interruption for a dead silence fell upon the assembly, as soon as the voice of approbation was heard. The current of censure had set so strongly in one direction, that it had swept every thing before it. But now its course was arrested by a *counter* current, which set in an opposite direction. There was some little confusion at this meeting of waters, for the turbid stream of censure still flowed strongly in its first course, while the chrystaline rill of modest enconium stole gently

through its bosom. Like the river Rhone which passes through a lake without borrowing the hue of its waters, this little stream mingled not with the opposing current.

To speak plainly, this benevolent eulogist on the absent Mrs Sawyer, was listened to in silence. She was a person of too much importance to be contradicted, and to tell the truth, Mrs Pinkerton was not aware of her presence, when she launched forth the arrows of her disapprobation against Mrs Sawyer. The old lady who was called Mrs Overton, had been complaining of indisposition early in the evening, and had asked leave to withdraw. To this request, Mrs Pinkerton had kindly acceded, and had insisted upon conveying the old lady into a comfortable apartment, *out of reach* of the noise of conversation, as she said, but really with a view to remove her from a premeditated attack upon one whom she was always sure to defend.

But Mrs Overton, after reposing herself for a brief space, had returned silently in the thickest strife, and taken a sly seat on the corner of a sopha behind the door. Mrs Pinkerton felt considerable disquietude when the old lady broke in upon her suddenly and unexpectedly. But she was too well versed in concealing her feelings, to let a sign of discomposure escape her. Therefore she maintained her presence of countenance, while her inward palpitations were considerable. She soon comforted herself with

the idea, that as good Mrs Overton was rather deaf, she might not have distinguished voices so well as to be able to assign to each speaker, her just proportion of vituperative remarks.

But unluckily the widow had gone so far in concealing her dislike to Mrs Sawyer, from Mrs Overton, that she now shuddered with apprehension, lest her double dealing should be made manifest. Like all the rest of the vast family of the "Surfaces," she hated to be found out. In this case too the evil was manifold; for Mrs Overton was a rich dowager without a relation in the world; and Mrs Pinkerton had served her for many years with such disinterested friendship, that she counted upon no inconsiderable share of spoil, when the coffers of the old lady should be made to yield up their treasures at her death.

Now Mrs Sawyer had become acquainted with Mrs Overton, by some provoking oversight of the far reaching widow, and it was gall and wormwood to her soul to find, that the unobtrusive worth of a new acquaintance should be actually encroaching on the well known prerogative of ancient friendship. But it is the way of the world, and it sometimes (as in the present case) proves a very provoking way, for congenial souls to meet and mingle, in spite of human skill and ingenuity, which are often exerted to keep them apart.

In far less time than we have taken up with

these remarks, Mrs Pinkerton had canvassed the matter in her own mind, and determined to believe what was agreeable to her, namely that Mrs Overton had *not* heard her remarks upon Mrs Sawyer. "The old soul is thick of hearing, said she to herself, and besides there has been such a strife of tongues amongst us, that I hardly know myself how to appropriate the different remarks that have been made. Mrs Overton thinks that I like Mrs Sawyer very much, and she is such a simple straight forward body, that she will still continue to think so, if I manage rightly. So now for an exertion of skill to cover up errors, &c.

So saying, (or at least so thinking) the lady of the house took a low seat and removed it next Mrs Overton's niche on the sofa. There she established herself in a most confidential attitude, and forthwith began to speak in a raised voice, for she was so interested in finding Mrs Overton's organs of hearing really deficient, that she determined to provide for this deficiency, by kindly elevating her tones. "Mrs Overton," said she, so loud, that the old lady, started, and every one else stared: Then modulating her accents as if to make another experiment, she went on; "Mrs Overton, I hope and trust, there is no truth in that cruel report, that Harriet Sawyer, is consumptive. Surely that rich bloom of hers must indicate sound health." But when Mrs Pinkerton looked side-ways into

Mrs Overton's face, she was surprised and alarmed at the expression she discovered, in its honest truth telling lineaments. There was more resentment visible there, than she had ever before witnessed, and her mind rambled away into futurity in melancholy anticipation. The company seemed to feel a general embarrassment, which, however, was a little relieved by Miss Peggy Pinkerton's repeating her mother's inquiry. The old lady then sighed and answered truly my child, I am afraid her case is alarming; but I shall endeavor to persuade her mother to try a sea-voyage for her health." "Ah!" said Mrs Pinkerton with a hypocritical whine. "I'm glad to hear she is able to afford such a remedy. I had apprehended her fortune would not admit of such an expensive thing as a sea-voyage." "Whether it does or not, I cannot tell," said the old lady, but *I* can afford it well; and I should deem my fortune well laid out (the whole of it) in saving such a life." So saying, and before Mrs Pinkerton, could recover from the dismay in which she was thrown by this speech, the benevolent old lady rose, and took a formal leave of the company. Mrs Pinkerton and her daughters followed to the gate with much obsequiousness, and one of them persisted in accompanying her to her lodging. The party who remained were somewhat panic struck also, though they had not as deep cause to be uneasy as the lady of the house. "Well,"

said an old lady, who stuttered so that she spoke with difficulty, "I, at least, am only guilty of listening," "and I am sure," said an old maiden lady, "that I have only spoken *truth*. Nobody need be ashamed of speaking truth." "Really," said a very shrewd young married lady, who happened to be of the party, "I have observed that almost every person has a different opinion of the meaning of that same word, *truth*. Now I for one, don't think that *truth* is generally spoken by all the world—therefore I never believe what *all the world* says; as for Mrs Sawyer, she is undoubtedly a very clever woman, for all the cleverest and most refined people visit her, and think highly of her. She certainly is very *amiable*, for *most* people love her dearly. I have been often in her company, but I never saw or heard any thing from her, but what was strictly correct and highly agreeable." "Indeed she *is* a fine woman," said another, "for I know well ——

What was so well known to the last speaker cannot be disclosed to the reader, as the return of the mistress of the revels, prevented the sentence from being completed. "Did you ever see Mrs Pinkerton, so *non plussed*," whispered a young lady, to the ancient stutterer, who shook her head and nodded mysteriously? "Well friends," said the lady of the house, after a struggle to throw off disagreeable feelings, "Let us call another subject. Have you heard that

Mrs Conway's family is in terrible confusion! His daughter, who was always a forward miss, to my thinking, has made a sort of a runaway match. Now for my part, I hate these pattern people, who are always so much better than their neighbours; I'm free to confess, that unless I see some of the leaven of humanity in a character, I am afraid to draw up familiarly with it, for fear of being thrown into the dark by a flood of light, pouring on me unexpectedly."

"Now that must be the reason why Mrs Pinkerton thinks so ill of every body;" whispered the young married lady, to the old stuttering dame, who was most unwillingly compelled to become a listener, from sheer inability to keep up with the talkers. "I never should have thought it possible to account for this peculiarity in any other way at all favorable to her character." "Humph!" said the old lady. "Now it is certain," continued Mrs Pinkerton, "that the Conway's love mystery better than any people I ever saw. At least they practise more of it. I, for one am not at all curious. *I* had as lieve be in ignorance as not, of their goings on, but then one loves to be able to answer inquiries, and it is hard to have nothing but conjecture to go upon. This match of Miss Conway's I know is bitterly against the wishes of her friends. The poor hysterical mother has been in fits ever since. The father storms, and vows his daughter shall never see the colour of his

money. In short, there has been quite a tragedy acted at the Rose Cottage. So much for a fantastic name. I never knew plain sense to come out of one of those romantic places. So speaking Mrs Pinkerton flounced out of the room in answer to a sign from one of her handmaidens, who beckoned to her from an adjoining room.

Mrs Allendale, the young married lady of whom we have spoken, now took occasion to give her version of the story of Miss Conway's marriage. "Poor Eliza Conway," said she, "how she would laugh if she knew what the world says of her. 'Twould be a good deed to tell her of it, she is so grieved at the thought of parting with her mother. The truth is, she has been a long time engaged to this young man, but her mother's health was so bad, she could not consent to leave her. At length Mr Conway discovered that his daughter was pining in secret over her attachment to a truly deserving young man, with a large fortune. The whole affair was brought to light, and the young couple married with the strong approbation of all parties. So much for the romance of Rose Cottage. 'Tis true though, that poor Mrs Conway's feelings overcame her on the wedding day, and she had a strong hysteric fit, which threw her poor daughter into great distress."

"But the sun has set, and we must be going homewards," said another lady. The party now

broke up, and left poor Mrs Pinkerton to her melancholy reflections. Yet not a thought of self-blame, disturbed her mind. She threw all the mortification on others, and bore no part of the burden herself. The next day news arrived that Mrs Overton was exceedingly ill. Her slight indisposition of the evening before increased so as to baffle medical aid, and she lived but one week after her memorable defence of Mrs Sawyer. That lady was with her in her last illness, and it was discovered after her death, that the whole of her large fortune was bequeathed to the interesting mother and daughter whose characters she had heard so unprovokingly assailed. Mrs Pinkerton never entirely recovered the mortification of this event, which was enhanced, by hearing, that a prior will had actually contained a large legacy to herself.

A MOTHER INDEED.

A TALE.

Albert Graham had been happy with the wife of his choice, through five swiftly fleeting years of his appointed term on earth. She had minister'd to his domestic comfort so skilfully, that when death withdrew her from that hallowed circle, he felt himself bereft at once of an intelligent companion and a tender, watchful attendant. No other hand was ever permitted to offer him refreshment on his return from his labors on the farm, save her own; and it was a bitter aggravation of his grief to receive his food from a menial, after having been accustomed to the services of a wife like his. Helen Graham had that indescribable charm of countenance which so well supplies the place of beauty. Her intellectual smile was a never failing solace to every passing care; and whatever adverse circumstances might have occurred from home, Albert laid down his burden of troubles as soon as his threshold was crossed, and the sun of his little sphere rose in cloudless serenity before his eyes. Helen had a voice like the wild forest

bird, which poured forth its melody throughout the day, as the regular accompanyment of household labor. It used to thrill to the heart of her husband as he caught its first warblings from the brow of the hill, on which his cottage was situated.

The first return of the bereaved husband to his desolate home, was an epoch of suffering never to be forgotten on this side of eternity. He had forced himself to resume the regular superintendence of his farm, and had risen before the first light of day to execute this settled purpose of his reviving reason. The usual hour of breakfast had long since passed away, when on the third summons from the house, Albert prepared to carry his heavy heart homewards. Slowly he ascended the hill, and on the very spot from which he was accustomed to catch the first notes of Helen's matin song, he made a sudden pause. With arms folded across his bosom, as if to still the throbbings of his perturbed heart, he remained fixed to the spot with downcast eyes. A slight noise roused him from this mournful reverie, and he looked slowly towards the sound. His eldest babe was tottering with uncertain steps to meet him, and he sprang forward with a bound to clasp the loved one to his bosom, for a moment he wept in agony over the infant, then dried his tears, and assumed an air of manly firmness.—The three first years of Albert's married life

had past without any prospect of a family; but so perfect was his conjugal felicity, that the want of children had scarcely been felt or acknowledged. Notwithstanding the content of the married pair under these circumstances, they did not attempt to deny that their enjoyments were greatly enhanced by the birth of a daughter, who bore the name, and inherited the features of her mother. Two years after her birth, Helen presented her fond husband with a son. Scarcely had she exulted, (with chastened feelings of gratitude to heaven,) over Albert's delight at receiving this pledge, than a fever attacked her weaken'd frame with irresistible violence, and bore her from her home of bliss on earth, to an unchangeable state of happiness above. The blow was so sudden, that it smote to the earth the unprepared victim. But Albert knew that submission to the will of Heaven was the first duty of a christian, and he strove against sorrow with ceaseless prayers. The first night of agony was passed in vehement strivings of the wounded spirit. He knelt by the cradle of his unconscious infant and prayed for strength to bear his heavy affliction. When he entered his silent dwelling with the little Helen clasped to his bosom, the compassionate servant girl pointed to the ready furnished table, and withdrew with tears in her eyes. Albert seated himself, and offered thanks in his accustomed manner, but bitter in-

deed were the first morsels swallowed at that desolate board, where each returning meal was wont to be cheered by the smiles of his best beloved on earth.

We will not follow the mourner through all the scenes of his domestic calamity. Suffice it to say, that the bereaved husband lifted up his heart to the source of all comfort with persevering prayer, until he gradually and almost insensibly attained peace and resignation. He could smile faintly at the broken accents of his little Helen, but his smile was like the reflected light of the departed sun, upon the clouds that have gathered round his sinking orb. Still, Albert owned progressive consolation, drawn from the pure source of divine truth. He lived in prayer, and the midnight hour often witnessed the pleading of his swollen heart before the throne of grace. Time swept away all traces of gloom from his benign countenance, and the ready heart-springing smile again gladdened his friends and cheered his domestics.

Meantime the sweet blossoms gathered from his withered bower of bliss, sprung up and flourished around him. Helen was now old enough to prattle intelligently at her father's board, and beguile the once heavy hours of his stated meals. His little son too, could sit on his knee and understand the ceremonials of the table. But as Helen grew larger, her father began bitterly to feel his inability to supply a

mother's place to her developing intellect.—His agricultural avocations necessarily engrossed much of his time, and Helen was now too old to be left to the care of ignorant servants. Precisely at this crisis, a female appeared in the neighborhood, who irresistably attracted the attention of the young widower.—Upon inquiry, she proved to be a distant relation of his departed Helen, and this circumstance endeared her to the still tender feelings of Albert Graham. A closer acquaintance developed many excellencies in the character of Mary Allen, and after two years' growing intimacy and increasing confidence, Albert once more saw a lovely, virtuous woman at the head of his domestic establishment.

Let not the fastidious mind revolt from this proof, that a first love does not necessarily preclude all other tender engagements of the heart. The same being, who has decreed that death shall separate the tenderest hearts, has also provided in his mercy a solace for this keenest form of human misery. When the Omnipotent takes to himself a tender husband or wife, it is often his will that the survivor shall find peace and even happiness in another connexion. Nor is the sanctity of conjugal love violated by such an event. The same heart that cherished a first love, while Heaven permitted, may find consolation in a second matrimonial connexion. It was thus with Al-

bert Graham—he loved to think of his Helen, now a glorified spirit, and to talk of her excellencies to his gentle Mary, who wept over the untimely fate of this lovely blossom, and strove to emulate her virtues. Often when she was rendering maternal offices to the children of her predecessor, would she indulge a hope that her disembodied spirit witnessed and approved her kindness.

When Helen Graham had attained her twelfth year, Albert received a letter from the mother of his first wife, requesting that the children of her deceased daughter might be permitted to visit her. This was a painful application to the judicious father, who justly feared that his offspring might receive injury from such a change in their mode of life. He knew that the character of his mother-in-law was in many respects repugnant to his ideas of female propriety; but he could not bring himself to refuse her solemn request entirely. After some consultation, it was determined that Helen should spend a month with her maternal grandmother. This time soon swept by, and Albert hastened himself to reclaim his first born darling. His surprise was great, when he arrived, after two days incessant travelling at the house of his mother-in-law, to find it vacant. She had departed on a tour of pleasure, and had taken Helen with her, leaving a letter of apology, if so it could be termed, to her father. The let-

ter stated, "that as Mrs Graham had children of her own, it followed as a necessary consequence that she could not love the children of another. Therefore the grandmother deemed it expedient to assert her prerogative over the offspring of her departed child, and keep Helen as long as possible under her care." Albert was justly offended at the insinuations contained in this singular epistle. He also felt anxious to know from what source these unjust suspicions of his tender hearted Mary, had arisen. Helen, he was sure, could never have sanctioned such injustice; and yet he could not help feeling hurt, that she should acquiesce in such an equivocal step, as a removal from her own home.

Albert was not aware, that the prejudice against step-mothers is so universal, as to render the duties of that office, however accurately and tenderly performed, thankless and precarious. A well meaning, but ignorant and prejudiced neighbor, had exerted herself successfully in poisoning the youthful mind of Helen. She had contracted some evil habits, while under the superintendence of servants, which her kind step-mother had found it difficult to eradicate. Mary had judiciously avoided appealing to her husband for his potential interference, so that Albert was ignorant of the trouble she had taken to rectify the errors of his child.—While the firm, but gentle opposition of the

step-mother to the bad habits of her charge, was gradually effecting her benevolent design, the tongue of every gossip in the neighborhood was let loose against her. "Surely Mr Graham must be blind to let his new wife tyrannize over his children as she does." "Ah! poor things, they miss their own tender mother, and no wonder, who ever yet knew a good step-mother?" All this while the unconscious Mary labored diligently in her vocation, and was rewarded by the smiles of her husband and an approving conscience. She had taken the orphans into her heart, and they remained there after Heaven had given her children of her own to love. "These are still the first born of my affections," she would say. "They taught me the sweetness of maternal love, and my own offspring have only perpetuated the same feeling." It happened one day, that Helen had given way to her naturally wayward temper, in presence of her father, and he had instantly reproved her and appointed a penance which was to keep her in confinement all day. Mrs Fanshaw, the injudicious neighbor, already mentioned, came unluckily to spend the same day with Mrs Graham. She missed Helen, and on inquiry, was simply told the cause of her abstraction from the family circle. This was enough to rouse the venomous spirit of censure.

The whole neighborhood soon teemed with various exaggerations of this incident, until it

actually affixed a stigma to the pure fame of Mrs Graham. Nor was this the worst consequence resulting from the interference of a silly, impertinent neighbor. Mrs Fanshaw, in gliding about the house, had discovered the place of Helen's confinement, and through an open window, had imparted to the yet sullen, unsubdued child, her own judicious views of the affair. She did not hesitate to exclaim against step-mothers, as the cause of half the misery of this world. After which she added, that *all the world*, (self-love often amplifies an individual into the world) felt for her misfortune, and inveighed against her cruel step-mother. Helen had candor enough to say, that her father had punished her on this occasion, but Mrs Fanshaw shook her head knowingly, and assured her, that her step-mother was at the bottom of the whole business. "*You* don't know child," said she, "but *I* do, what strange, odd, bad sort of people they are." As poor Helen was unluckily under the influence of the malevolent demon of discontent, when this speech was made, it made a correspondingly deep impression. Her mind filled with unamiable forebodings, and Mrs Graham perceived with surprise and sorrow, that solitary confinement had not wrought its usual good effects upon her young charge. From this time, the temper of Helen became unusually stubborn, and the tender Mrs Fanshaw took care to lend her aid in main-

taining the unholy flame of her own kindling, with constant and suitable fuel. As the parents were ignorant of any counteracting influence, existing in their family, they were grieved and surprised at the contumacity of their child and pupil.

Things continued in this state, when Helen left her father's house, as above stated, on a visit to her grandmother. It is almost inconceivable what trifles will tend to increase or perpetuate a serious evil. Albert Graham had dismissed from his family on his second marriage, a servant who had belonged to the mother of his first wife. This woman was of an intriguing, sly disposition, and having enjoyed a place of high trust in the widower's establishment, she entertained no complacent feeling towards the second wife of her master. No sooner was Helen received in her grandmother's family, than this malignant female assaulted her with ready fabricated tales, illustrative of her stepmother's character. At first, the child revolted from this system of falsehood; but finding herself the object of much commisseration, from the supposed ill treatment of her father's wife, she gradually yielded to the torrent and became the dupe of misplaced compassion. No pains were spared to rivet her newly implanted prejudices against Mrs Graham, and being surrounded by malevolent spirits, she fell an easy prey to their machinations.

Mr Graham lost no time in endeavoring to discover the place of retreat, to which his child had been hurried, without his knowledge. All his attempts however were vain, and it appeared manifest, that a deliberate scheme had been formed to supersede his paternal privileges. Time passed without any relief to his anxieties, and he began at length to mourn for his daughter, as if she had been taken from him by death.

Four years elapsed in this state of suspense, when at length the mystery was elucidated by the arrival of the following letter from Helen's grandmother, bearing date from some distant town in the western settlements.

"To Mr Albert Graham.

Sir—This is to inform you, that your daughter Helen, has eloped from boarding school with a young adventurer, and is gone, no one knows whither. When I took her away by stratagem from her unkind step-mother, I little dreamed of such an ungrateful return for my affectionate conduct. But I give her up forever, and have already altered my will, and revoked a large bequest originally made to her. She has chosen for herself, and must abide by her choice.

I remain your sorrowful friend,

Martha Palmer."

When Mr Graham had perused this letter, he immediately addressed a reply to Mrs Palmer,

requesting her to make every inquiry relative to the fugitive, and to give him information, if possible, as to her place of refuge. His heart swelled to think of the probable fate of his misguided child, and he lost no time in making arrangements for bringing her home to his house and his protection. But disease arrested him in the midst of these labors of love, and he was soon removed from his contented lot on earth, to a home of bliss above. The grief of his widow, was sincere and deep, but she soon had other troubles to contend with, besides sorrow for his loss. The property bequeathed to her by her husband, was wrested from her by a hard hearted relative, in a fraudulent law-suit. She found herself reduced to poverty, with three children of her own, and one of her husbands. But Mary was a woman of true piety, and possessed that calmness and heroism which belong only to the truly pious.

She rose from her momentary prostration, to grapple firmly with the evils of her lot. With the slender pittance, rescued from the rapacious claims of her enemy, she took lodgings with a friend to whom she was tenderly attached. There, with solemn trust in the promised friend of the friendless, she committed herself and her helpless little ones to the Father and God of all. Years passed away in humble poverty, when one evening as Mary sat in a little garden near her cottage, she heard piteous wail-

ings, which seemed to come from the road that skirted the common. She hastened to the spot and found a woman, apparently in the agonies of death. With ready humanity, she gave all possible aid in removing her to the house, where she discovered that hunger and cold were the prevailing causes of her illness. Those evils being mitigated, the wretched creature recovered the use of speech, but was soon found to have sustained a serious injury in losing the use of her limbs, in consequence of her long exposure to the inclement skies without a shelter. The unfortunate widow felt a thrill of anguish at her heart, when she discovered the first-born child of her beloved Albert in the forlorn object before her. But she no sooner ascertained this fact, than she clasped her with cordial love and pity to her bosom, and forgave her transgressions before she had time to learn their nature or extent.

Helen appeared truly penitent, and although she received the embraces of her step-mother with gratitude, she did not hesitate to declare the full measure of her wretchedness and desolation. "I'm innocent of the great offence alleged against me," said she, "but the world will not believe my assertions. I am cast off by a wretch who grew weary of me, and accused me of a crime that will extenuate his conduct to the world. But it matters little for me to assert my innocence, or indeed to possess it.

I am equally wretched, having no means of exculpating my conduct to the world." "But you are mistaken my dear child," said her tender mother, "in saying that your real innocence is of little importance. You are saved the reproaches of your own conscience, besides having a constant hope that heaven will one day prove you to have been innocent. Besides knowing in your own heart, that you are not guilty of the crime alleged against you, there will be many sources of consolation opened to you, that you could not otherwise enjoy. Fear nothing; there is one, who will watch unceasingly over all who trust in him." Helen wept bitterly, for alas! she had hitherto rejected the comforts of religion.

But her tender step-mother strove unceasingly to open her mind to conviction. The miseries of Helen were irremediable, save by the never failing arguments of Christianity. She continued to languish in pain and helplessness, during ten years, without ever hearing from the vile creature who had prevailed on her to elope with him, from an idea that her fortune would be considerable; and being disappointed in this hope, he treated her cruelly, and finally aspersed her character and turned her from his house on the cold pitiless world. Helen became, under the influence of her step-mother, a good Christian and a patient sufferer. She was unable to labor for her own support. but this duty

was cheerfully performed by her most excellent step-parent, who became to the repentant wanderer a mother indeed.

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